

THE POLYSEMOUS RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE SENSES OF THE VERBAL ROOT חזק¹

I. INTRODUCTION

If one considers available literature on the Biblical Hebrew (=BH) lemma חזק, it is evident that it has been thoroughly investigated and described². Wakely³ summarizes the possible translation values of the verbal root חזק that could be gleaned from the available resources as follows:

“q. be strong; make o.s. strong; summon one’s strength; overpower; have courage; pi. strengthen, fortify, reinforce, repair; support, assist, encourage; tie; seize; hi. lay hold of, catch fast; adhere to, devote (o.s.) to; join, associate with; contain; detain; show o.s. strong; hitp. show o.s. courageous; behave (or act) with resolution; urge; constrain; withstand; be, become strengthened; be, become firmly established.”

It is not obvious, however, if and how these senses may relate to one another. This is mainly due to the fact that Wakely, like Brown – Driver – Briggs (=BDB), Koehler – Baumgartner – Richardson – Stamm (=HALOT) and Clines, uses the stem formations as his primary ordering principle in his lexical treatment of the lemma. Readers must “search” and connect for themselves the conceptually similar senses among the stem formation headings.

Hesse⁴ and Van der Woude⁵ have broken away from this tradition. However, the relevance of the “frames” that Hesse uses to analyse and

¹ The financial assistance of the National Research Foundation of South Africa towards this research is hereby acknowledged. Opinions expressed in this publication and the conclusions arrived at are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to the NRF.

² See, for example, F. BROWN – S.R. DRIVER – C.A. BRIGGS, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford 1907) 305; F. HESSE, “חזק *chāzaq*”, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* (eds. G.J. BOTTERWECK – H. RINGGREN) (Grand Rapids, MI 1980) 301-308; L. KOEHLER – W. BAUMGARTNER – M.E.J. RICHARDSON – J.J. STAMM, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Electronic ed. Leiden 1994-2000) 302-304; D.J.A. CLINES (ed.), *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. Vol. III (Sheffield 1993-2011) 184-190; A.S. VAN DER WOUDE, “חזק *hzaq* to be firm”, *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*. (eds. E. JENNI – C. WESTERMANN) (Peabody, MA 1997) 403-406; and R. WAKELY, “חזק”, *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*. Vol. II (ed. W. VANGEMEREN) (Grand Rapids, MI 1997) 63-88.

³ WAKELY, “חזק”, 64.

⁴ HESSE, “חזק *chāzaq*”, 301-308; VAN DER WOUDE, “חזק *hzaq*”, 404.

⁵ VAN DER WOUDE, “חזק *hzaq*”, 404.

structure the data can be called into question ⁶. The brevity of Van der Woude's treatment of the lemma, unfortunately, prevents him from discussing critically some of the ambiguous cases.

Exegetes and translators of the lexeme are therefore often confronted with the challenge to establish for themselves which of the range of translation equivalents, and senses, of חֹזֶק is the most appropriate one in a specific context. # 1 is a good illustration in this regard.

1	<p>... עלו זה ¹⁷ וראיתם את-הארץ מה-הוא ... ¹⁸ ... הישיבה עץ ²⁰ אם-אין והתחזקתם ולקחתם מפרי הארץ</p>	<p>¹⁷ "Go up there ... ¹⁸ and see what the land is like, ..., ²⁰and whether there are trees in it or not. <i>Take pains (NJPS) / do your best (NIV/NLT) / be of good courage (ESV) / be bold (NRSV) / be courageous (CEB)</i> and bring some of the fruit of the land." (Num 13,17-20).</p>
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In #1, the question is: must the Hitp stem formation of חֹזֶק be interpreted as "to muster one's physical strength to do something" or as "to show courage/ be bold"? If one considers the lexica, BDB ⁷ describes this instance as to "put forth strength, use one's strength", and HALOT ⁸ reads it as "to show oneself courageous". The latter interpretation is mirrored by Hesse ⁹ and Wakely ¹⁰. Clines ¹¹ lists #1 under the heading "strengthen oneself, show oneself strong, hold fast, take courage". In other words, only a list of possible translation equivalents is provided.

Lexicographical resources on the languages of the Bible have been criticized from various points of view in the last 50 years ¹². An issue that

⁶ I use the notion "frames" in quotation marks since Hesse discusses the uses of חֹזֶק merely under the following headings: 1. Individuals; 2. Nations and their representatives; 3. Things; 4. Special meaning; 5. Hiphil, etc.

⁷ BDB, 305.

⁸ HALOT, 304.

⁹ HESSE, "חֹזֶק *chāzaq*", 307.

¹⁰ WAKELY, "חֹזֶק", 77.

¹¹ CLINES, *DCH Vol. 3*, 190.

¹² See, e.g., J. BARR, "Hebrew Lexicography", *Studies on Semitic Lexicography* (ed. P. FRONZAROLI) (Firenze 1973) 103-126; R. DE BLOIS, "Towards a New Dictionary of Biblical Hebrew Based on Semantic Domains" (PhD Dissertation; Amsterdam, Free University 2000); M.P. O'CONNOR "Semitic Lexicography: European Dictionaries of Biblical Hebrew in the Twentieth Century", *IOS XX* (2002) 173-212; C.H.J. VAN DER MERWE, 'Biblical Hebrew Lexicology: A Cognitive Linguistic Perspective', *KUSATU* 6 (2006a) 87-112; T. IMBAYARWO, "A Biblical Hebrew Lexicon for Translators Based on Recent Developments in Theoretical Lexicography" (PhD Dissertation; Stellenbosch University 2008); S.L. SHEAD, *Radical Frame Semantics and Biblical Hebrew*. Exploring Lexical Semantics (Leiden 2011) 321-333; and K. PETERS, *Hebrew Lexical Semantics and Daily Life in Ancient Israel*. What's Cooking in Biblical Hebrew? (Leiden 2016) 12-22.

tends to be raised in most of these criticisms concerns the semantic model of the resources — either the lack thereof, or the inadequacy of the one used.

The study of language has seen in the past hundred years some major advances and paradigm shifts. In the field of semantics, those who came after the early stage of historical philology adopted a number of new approaches and models. Geeraerts describes them with the following categories: structuralist semantics, generative semantics, neo-structuralist semantics and cognitive semantics. In his discussion of the relationship between these models, he remarks: “... there is ... a remarkable correspondence between the basic position of historical-philological and cognitive semantics”¹³. As an approach that puts understanding the “mechanics of meaning” at the heart of the linguistic enterprise, it is indeed in many ways no new esoteric theory of language. It is more an attempt to model what speakers and readers do when they communicate in terms of what we know of the workings of the human mind. Since the language and communication of human beings are so complex, cognitive linguistic models are, therefore, complex by definition. Although cognitive semantics does not provide exhaustive and universally accepted guidelines for the grammatical and lexicographical description of language¹⁴, it has shed light on how the meaning of words tends to extend and shift. These insights have proven to be significant for the treatment of polysemy in lexica¹⁵.

This investigation has a very narrow focus¹⁶. It aims to demonstrate the benefits of using some basic insights of cognitive semantics for the

¹³ D. GEERAERTS, *Theories of Lexical Semantics* (Oxford 2010) 277.

¹⁴ For a succinct overview of the application of insights from cognitive semantics to Biblical Studies in the last twenty years, see M.E. BURTON, *The Semantics of Glory. A Cognitive, Corpus-Based Approach to Hebrew Word Meaning* (Leiden 2017) 17-30. According to BURTON, *The Semantics*, 23, a crucial challenge for BH scholars is “how cognitive methods can be adapted in the context of ancient languages, and how cognitive data is to be drawn from the texts themselves”. See also SHEAD, *Radical Frame Semantics*, 323-322, and R. DE BLOIS, “Cognitive Linguistics: Approaches to Biblical Hebrew”, *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics* (ed. G. KHAN) (Leiden 2013) 471-472.

¹⁵ See D. GEERAERTS, “Lexicography”, *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics* (eds. D. GEERAERTS – H. CUYCKENS) (Oxford 2007) 1160-1174, and S.T. GRIES, “Polysemy”, *Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics* (eds. E. DĄBROWSKA – D. DIVJAK) (Berlin 2015) 472-490.

¹⁶ See, in contrast, DE BLOIS, “Towards a New Dictionary”, and E.J. VAN WOLDE, *Reframing Biblical Studies. When Language and Text Meet Culture, Cognition, and Context* (Winona Lake, IN 2009) 403-406. Van Wolde proposes how Biblical Studies could be “reframed”, and De Blois provides the foundation of an entire new lexicon in light of Cognitive Linguistics. Currently, the making of the *Semantic Dictionary of Biblical Hebrew* (=SDBH) is already far beyond the halfway mark. See: <http://www.sdbh.org/>. One of the significant features of this electronic dictionary is that each entry in the lexicon is categorized

better understanding of the polysemous relationships between the senses of the verbal root of הזק (as they are attested in the Hebrew Bible). It is hypothesized that the ability to construe well-justified polysemous relationships between linguistic expressions holds one of the keys to a more rigorous and theoretically justifiable lexicographical description of Biblical Hebrew.

I commence in Section II by briefly describing those cognitive semantic insights that underpin the working hypothesis of this investigation. In Section III, I formulate the working hypothesis that was utilized in my categorization and construction of the polysemous relationships between the senses of the verbal root הזק . In the main body of the paper (Section IV), I present and discuss my analysis and categorization of 290 uses of the lexeme in the Hebrew Bible ¹⁷. The emerging profile of the lexeme's uses is utilized to argue for specific construals of the most pertinent ambiguous instances. I conclude with a summary of the findings.

II. ASSUMPTIONS

I have used three major insights from cognitive semantics that I regard as fundamental for the understanding of polysemy ¹⁸. Firstly, although sense extensions cannot be predicted, they typically can be explained. Figurative shifts of meaning, e.g. metaphorical and metonymic shifts, and shifts which could be described as instances of specialization or generalization, are not new insights as far as the field of semantics is concerned ¹⁹. However, cognitive semanticists have shed some new light on the pervasiveness of conceptual metonyms and metaphors ²⁰ in language use as well as the role of image-metaphors and conceptual blending in the figurative extension of

in terms of well-structured lexical definitions and a range of contextual frames. For the study of Ancient Hebrew lexical sets from a cognitive linguistic perspective, see C.H.J. VAN DER MERWE, "Lexical Meaning in Biblical Hebrew and Cognitive Semantics: a Case Study", *Bib* 87 (2006) 85-95; W.L. WIDDER, 'To Teach' in *Ancient Israel. A Cognitive Linguistic Study of a Biblical Hebrew Lexical Set* (Berlin 2014); PETERS, *Hebrew Lexical Semantics*; and BURTON, *The Semantics*.

¹⁷ This analysis benefitted from a recent unpublished entry prepared by Reiner de Blois in *Vocabula* for the SDBH. His proposed entry is a substantial revision of DE BLOIS, "Towards a New Dictionary", 169-174, and is the result of a working-session that was held in April 2017 at Onrus River in South Africa. During this working-session, we critically discussed my provisional analysis and description of הזק .

¹⁸ Burton regards what she calls "Prototype Theory", "Frame Theory" and "Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Conceptual Blending" as "probably the three most significant developments within the cognitive school" (*The Semantics*, 11-17).

¹⁹ See GEERAERTS, *Theories*, 25-44.

²⁰ See GEERAERTS, *Theories*, 181-183.

the senses of linguistic expressions ²¹. On account of these sense extensions, a particular linguistic expression acquires a semantic potential, i.e. the range of possible senses that could be construed whenever construction x is used in contexts y, z, etc.

As far as the process of sense extension is concerned, the most basic extension will be from the concrete to the abstract. In the case of חֵזֶק, it is, for example, from bodily strength to military and political strength (see the shift from §IV.1.1 to §IV.1.2 and then mental courage §IV.2). However, it is also possible that a frequently occurring expression with a very specific form (i.e. Hiph plus the preposition ב) and sense (i.e. “to grasp something”) is conventionalized and that the expression gets a life of its own with extensions from concrete to abstract (see §IV.1.1.d.i-iv). In other words, sense extensions are not linear, but rather tend to form clusters of extensions surrounding prototypes. This implies that when one categorizes the instances in a corpus, an attempt must be made to establish the prototypical uses first. However, when one works with the relatively small and closed corpus of texts of an ancient language (based on a canonical text with a long and complicated history), one does not have speakers to ask whether or not they regard a particular meaning or sense as the prototype of a category of use. Frequency of use plus breadth of distribution of the members of a category are the only distinctive criteria with which we can operate; hence the extensive use of frequency in our investigation.

Secondly, since language is complex, one has to expect that any attempt to systemize the use and meaning(s) of linguistic expressions in terms of neat and discrete categories is by definition not possible. This is why one of the cornerstones of cognitive linguistics is the insight that humans conceptualize their world in categories that have prototypical members and less-prototypical members ²². One of the unavoidable implications of this way of categorization is that categories tend to have fuzzy borders ²³. For

²¹ Geeraerts provides an overview of how shifts of meaning have been treated in historical-philological semantics, and also how it was further refined by cognitive semantics (*Theories*, 25-44, 182-287). See also N. RIEMER, *Introducing Semantics* (Cambridge 2010) 372-384. For a recent critical assessment of models of semantic shifts, see J. NEWMAN, “Semantic Shift”, *The Routledge Handbook of Semantics* (ed. N. RIEMER) (London 2016) 266-280.

²² See RIEMER, *Introducing Semantics*, 224-260, and also J.A. HAMPTON, “Categories, Prototypes and Exemplars”, *The Routledge Handbook of Semantics* (ed. N. RIEMER) (London 2016) 125-141.

²³ See B. LEWANDOWSKA-TOMASZCZYK, “Polysemy, Prototypes, and Radial Categories”, *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics* (eds. D. GEERAERTS – H. CUYCKENS) (Oxford 2007) 139-169, and J.R. TAYLOR, “Prototypes Effects in Grammar”, *Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics* (eds. E. DĄBROWSKA – D. DIVJAK) (Berlin 2015) 562-579.

our study of *חֹזֶק*, it implies that one has to accept, firstly, that some of the categories will overlap, and, secondly, that some instances of the lexeme's uses will be difficult to categorize.

Thirdly, extensions of meaning go hand-in-hand with shifts of contextual and syntagmatic frames (e.g. fixed expressions). It is common sense that we need to use its particular context to disambiguate the sense of vague (or lexically underspecified) uses of a linguistic expression. Frame semantics tries to capture some of the systematic dimensions of this process²⁴. One of the greatest challenges of frame semantics is determining which frame elements are relevant for determining the sense of a lexical unit²⁵. In this study, it was necessary to address the question of whether a vivid image metaphor (as frame element) completely lost its experimental basis and so acquired only a more abstract sense (See §IV.2.a-c and footnote 97).

III. WORKING HYPOTHESIS

In the light of the above-mentioned basic insights from cognitive semantics, and the fact that *חֹזֶק* has been identified as one of the basic level terms for the concept “strength”²⁶, I have postulated the following working-model:

1. Establish the most concrete bodily senses of the lexeme and the contextual frames in which those instances were used, which display a family resemblance (see §IV.1.1.a-c).
2. Determine whether any obvious and frequently occurring formal configurations can be detected among the concrete bodily senses (see §IV.1.1.d).
3. If any of the above-mentioned categories of use occurs frequently and is widely distributed, consider it a prototypical category and assume that the chances are good that one can explain some non-concrete (see §IV.2) uses and/or figurative (see §§IV.1.1.c.iii, IV.1.1.d.i-iv, IV.1.2 and IV.1.3) extensions in terms of these prototypical concrete bodily uses.
4. Establish if and how the “normal” semantic functions of the root formation operate in the above-mentioned categories and subcategories.

²⁴ In this regard, see also D. GEERAERTS, “Lexical Semantics”, *Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics* (eds. E. DĄBROWSKA – D. DIVJAK) (Berlin 2015) 273-295.

²⁵ See SHEAD, *Radical Frame Semantics*, for a detailed discussion of frame semantics, its potential and its limitations in describing Biblical Hebrew.

²⁶ VAN DER MERWE, “Lexical Meaning”, 91.

5. Consider if and how in any of the contextual frames conceptualizations that are unique to the speech community involved could be identified, and if by any means some of these conceptualizations could be linked to any formal pattern of use (see §IV.2.a-c).

In the light of the emerging bigger picture of the senses and uses of the lemma, consider the ambiguous instances of חזק. (See, e.g., #1, #3, #6, #11 and #41).

IV. THE SENSES AND USES OF חזק

1. *The Ability to Exert Physical Force* (153+64+8=225/290)

If one considers the frequency of use, the width of distribution and the number of sub-categories that can be motivated in terms of this category, this is the most prototypical sense of חזק. At the most generic level the lemma refers to the bodily strength that living entities have (Qal), receive or give to others (Piel) or muster (Hitp) to perform tasks that require an effort. An event or object may also “be strong” (Qal) or “be strengthened” (Piel and Hiph).

1.1. Humans (9+8+65+71=153)

a. Bodily strength to perform everyday activities (9×)

The contextual frame of this sub-category is one where humans have lost their bodily strength, but have regained it (#2) or summoned it (#3).

2	ישמע כי חלה ויחזק	For he heard that he had been sick and <i>had recovered</i> (Isa 39,1) ²⁷ .
3	יאמר אל תירא איש חמדות שלום לך חזק וחזק וכדברו עמי התחזקתי ואמרה ידבר אדני כי חזקתני	He said, “Do not fear, greatly beloved, you are safe. <i>Be strong, yes be strong</i> ” When he spoke to me, <i>I could summon my strength</i> ²⁸ and said, “Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me” (Dan 10,19).

²⁷ See also Ezek 30,21 (Qal); Dan 10,19a (Qal); 10,19ba (Hitp). For uses in the Piel, see Ezek 34,4.16; Dan 10,18.16bb.

²⁸ It is reasonable to postulate that Daniel reported: “I could summon my strength”. Most major translations render the Hitp as “I was strengthened” (KJV, ESV, NIV, NJPS, NRSV) or “I felt strong” (CEB). See also J.J. COLLINS – A.Y. COLLINS, *Daniel. A Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Minneapolis, MN 1993) 362. Some recent commentaries,

b. Bodily Strength to Exert Force in order to Perform Activities that Require an Effort (8×).

The first frame of this sub-category is that of the exertion of bodily strength to perform activities that require an effort. Only instances where this strength was given in the Piel (#4) or summoned in the Hitp (#5) are attested ²⁹.

4	ויקרא שמשון אל יהוה ויאמר אדני יהוה זכרני נא וחזקני נא אך הפעם הזה האלהים...	Then Samson called to YHWH and said, “Lord YHWH, remember me and <i>strengthen</i> <i>me</i> only this once, O God, ... (Judg 16,28).
5	ויגד ליעקב ויאמר הנה בנך יוסף בא אליך ויתחזק ישראל וישב על המטה	When Jacob was told, “Look, your son Joseph has come to you,” <i>Israel summoned</i> <i>his strength</i> and sat up in bed (Gen 48,2).

While in frames of conflict the Hitp can refer to instances where mental strength was mustered to face a challenging situation (see #37 in §IV.2.a below), there is an instance (#6) ³⁰ where it could be argued that what is profiled is the mustering of physical strength to perform a challenging task rather than that of mental strength. There is no indication in the context that would have given Hezekiah reason “to take courage”, i.e. to muster

including J.E. GOLDINGAY, *Daniel* (Dallas, TX 1998) 277, and L.F. HARTMAN – A.A. DI LELLA, *The Book of Daniel. A New Translation with Notes and Commentary on Chapters 1–9* (New Haven, CT 2008) 256, interpret the lemma as referring to mental strength, and translate “I became more courageous”. Neither substantiate the translation they opt for. If one considers Dan 10,8 as the contextual frame of 10,19, where the speaker recounts that there was no strength (כח) left in him, this latter interpretation can be called into question.

²⁹ The domain of the ability of the hand to control what it holds is sometimes blended by means of an image metaphor with a political situation. In the Qal: *יהי כאשר חזקה בידו* “as soon as the kingship was firmly in his hand, ...” (2 Kgs 14,5) and the Hiph: *להחזיק הממלכה בידו* “to strengthen the kingship in his hand” or as the CEB reads “to strengthen his hold on the kingdom” (2 Kgs 15,19). The parallel text of 2 Kgs 14,5 in 2 Chr 25,3 is worded: *יהי כאשר חזקה הממלכה עליו*. Another image metaphor of the hand used to exert force and control is Ezek 3,14 *יד יהוה עלי חזקה* “the hand of YHWH being strong on me”. See W. ZIMMERLI, *Ezekiel. A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel* (Philadelphia, PA 1979) 139; D.I. BLOCK, *The Book of Ezekiel. Chapters 1–24*. (Grand Rapids, MI 1997) 132, and M. GREENBERG, *Ezekiel 1–20. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven, CT 2008) 71, for a similar reading of the construction. The sense in Ezek 3,14 shares a family relationship and overlap with instances where an entity with power disallows another any movement. See 2 Sam 18,9 in § IV.1.2.a.

³⁰ See also R.W. KLEIN, *2 Chronicles. A Commentary* (Minneapolis, MN 2012) 456; and CEB, NET, NIV, and NJPS.

his mental strength in #6³¹. If one now considers #1, it cannot be denied that the tasks that were assigned to the scouts required mental courage. However, the specific task to bring some of fruit of the land was an appeal to exert physical effort — particularly if the size of the grapes bunches is considered (Num 13,23). Furthermore, efforts to summon another to be courageous or brave in a challenging situation are typical of directive constructions in the Qal (see #33 and #34 in §IV.2.a)³².

6	וַיִּתְחַזֵּק יִזְכָּרְיָהוּ אֶת כָּל הַחֹמָה הַפְּרוּצָה	Hezekiah <i>mustered his strength</i> (i.e. worked hard) and built up the entire wall that was broken down (2 Chr 32,5).
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c. The Ability to Exert Force in Conflict Situations (18+26+21=65×)

This category overlaps with §b, since it refers typically to the ability to exert physical force, but now in a combat with somebody else or another force, typically within a military frame (§IV.1.1.c.i.)³³. Military force, in turn, is often associated with (and/or extended to) a political force frame (§IV.1.1.c.ii.). The exertion of force in a conflict frame is extended figuratively to the ability to prevail in an argumentative frame (§IV.1.1.c.iii.). In this frame, the ability to resist giving in to the appeals or arguments of others are also involved.

c.i. Physical and/or Military Force in a Conflict Frame (18×)

The most frequently occurring construction in this sub-category is the Qal of **חִזַּק** with the preposition **מִן** (7#)³⁴. Instances without the preposition are also attested (#8)³⁵. Constructions with **עַל** have the connotation of “overpower x” (#9)³⁶.

³¹ See, in this regard, J.M. MYERS, *II Chronicles*. Introduction, Translation and Notes (New Haven, CT 1965) 185, and ISV which translates “He took courage”. The ESV and NRSV appear to follow a middle road: “he worked resolutely”.

³² Only one construction of the Hitp in the imperative, where addressees are summoned to “take courage”, is attested: 1 Sam 4,9. See the NJB and NRSV.

³³ The expression **בְּיַד חִזְקָה** is a fixed expression with the adjective of **חִזַּק**. God’s strong hand symbolizes the power with which He acted in a conflict frame, typically to liberate his people from their enemies. See, e.g. Exod 6,1; 13,9; 32,11; Deut 3,34; 4,34.

³⁴ Also 1 Sam 17,50; 2 Sam 13,14; 1 Kgs 20,23(2×).25 and 1 Chr 19,12 (2×). In 1 Kgs 16,22, **אֶת** instead of **מִן** is used. However, some Hebrew manuscripts read **מִן**. The Peshitta and some Targums also translate the equivalent of **מִן**.

³⁵ Also Ezra 9,12.

³⁶ Also Dan 11,5b and 2 Chr 8,3. Some English translations (e.g. ESV, NRSV, and NIV) render the construction in Daniel as “be(come) stronger than”, while the CEB renders it as “overpower him”. In 2 Chr 8,3, the entity that is “overpowered” is a city; hence some translations render the construction there as “seize it” (CEB), or “capture it” (NIV and NRSV), or “took it” (ESV). The NJPS has “overpower it”.

One instance without על, but in the Hiph, appears to have the same sense of the Qal construction with על (#10).

7	וַיֹּאמֶר אִם תַּחֲזֹק אֲרָם מִמֶּנִּי וְהִיְתָה לִי לִישׁוּעָה וְאִם בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן יַחֲזִיקוּ מִמֶּךָ וְהִלַּכְתִּי לְהוֹשִׁיעַ לָךְ	He said, “If the Arameans are too <i>strong</i> for me, then you shall help me; but if the Ammonites are too <i>strong</i> for you, then I will come and help you (2 Sam 10,11).
8	וְשָׁמַרְתֶּם אֶת כָּל הַמִּצְוָה אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מִצְוֶה הַיּוֹם לִמְעַן תַּחֲזִיקוּ וּבִאתֶם וִירִשְׁתֶּם אֶת הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲתֶם עֹבְרִים שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ	Keep, then, this entire commandment that I am commanding you today, so that you <i>may have strength</i> to go in and occupy the land that you are crossing over to occupy (Deut 11,8) ³⁷ .
9	וְהוּא נִלָּחֵם עִם מֶלֶךְ בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן וַיַּחֲזֹק עֲלֵיהֶם	He fought with the king of the Ammonites and <i>overpowered them</i> (2 Chr 27,5).
10	וְעֵצֶד מִנְּצָר שְׂרָשִׁיָּה כִּנּוּ וַיֵּבֵא אֶל הַחֵיל וַיֵּבֵא בַּמְּעוֹז מֶלֶךְ הַצָּפוֹן וַעֲשֶׂה בָהֶם וְהַחֲזִיק	A branch from her roots shall rise up in his place. He shall come against the army and enter the fortress of the king of the north, and he shall take action against them and <i>prevail</i> (Dan 11,7).

In #11 ³⁸, we find a Hitp form of חָזַק. Exegetes and translators differ about how the sense of this root formation should be construed. Anderson ³⁹ suggests “we are bound to prevail”, and McCarter ⁴⁰ “we will exert ourselves”, and Auld “let us strengthen ourselves” ⁴¹. Some render the construction as “be courageous” (CEB, ESV, NASB and NRSV), others “to fight bravely” (NET, NIV and NLT), while the NJPS reads “be resolute.”

If we now apply the insights provided by the rest of our analysis, it can be argued that the first חָזַק, a Qal imperative, in a situation that is very challenging — in particular to enter into a battle with hostile forces that appear to be strong — is an appeal to mental strength (§IV.2.a). This is a notion that is typically expressed in English as “be brave”. If one considers the suggestion in 2 Sam 10,11 to help one another, it makes sense to construe the Hitp in accordance with its concrete reflexive use, i.e. to muster one’s strength, which in the battle frame here can be rendered as “let us muster our forces”. In #11 we therefore have used — in accordance

³⁷ The grounds for postulating a conflict frame in #8 is based on Deut 11,23.

³⁸ Also 1 Chr 19:13.

³⁹ A.A. ANDERSON, *2 Samuel* (Dallas, TX 1998) 144.

⁴⁰ P.K. MCCARTER Jr., *II Samuel*. A New Translation with Introduction, Notes, and Commentary (New Haven, CT 2008) 266.

⁴¹ A.G. AULD, *I & II Samuel*. A Commentary (Louisville, KY 2012) 440. Auld inserts after “let us strengthen ourselves” the phrase “and let us fight”.

with our theoretical model — evidence from form-function pairing in particular frames to propose a more probable construal of a Qal imperative and Hitp use of חזק.

11	חזק ונתחזק בעד עמנו ובעד ערי אלהינו יהיה יעשה הטוב בעיניו	Be brave, and <i>let us muster our forces</i> for the sake of our people, and for the cities of our God; and may YHWH do what seems good to him (2 Sam 10,12).
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c.ii. Political Force (26×)

In this frame, a political entity (a king, a kingdom or a political/ethnic group) can, in the Qal, “become strong” (#12)⁴². In the Piel, the political entity may be “made strong” or “strengthened,” — often by God (#13)⁴³.

The Piel of חזק in #13 deserves special attention. Most translations and scholars opted for (or the equivalent of) “And I will clothe him with your robe *and bind your sash on him*”⁴⁴. They all seem to follow the current wisdom of the lexica⁴⁵ and theological dictionaries⁴⁶, which base this interpretation of חזק in the Piel on the apparent semantic parallelism in Isa 22,21ab, an Arabic equivalent (*ḥazaqa* “to tie up”), and a similar sense that seems to occur in Nah 2,2. However, the supposedly cognate evidence can be called into question⁴⁷, and Nah 2,2 does not necessarily mean ‘to tie up your loins’⁴⁸. Furthermore, the Piel of חזק

⁴² Judg 1,28; 2 Chr 26,15; Dan 11,5a. Why in 2 Chr 26,6 the Hiph root formation is used, is not clear.

⁴³ Also 1 Chr 29,12. In Ezek 30,24, God makes the arms of the king of Babel strong, and in Hos 7,15 the arms of his people. In Ezek 30,24 (and perhaps Hos 7,15) reference is made to the political and/or military strength of the entity referred to. Why a Qal is used in 2 Chr 28,20 is not certain. KLEIN, *2 Chronicles*, 391, points out that this phrase is lacking in the LXX, and the BHS repoints the Qal as a Piel. In Ezek 30,25, a Hiph form is used to refer to the same sense as a Piel in 30,24. And, in Dan 11,1 and 11,6 a Hiph (participle) of חזק is used for “to strengthen.” It therefore appears as if the typical factitive sense of the Piel and the causative sense of the Hiph in these instances (that all appear in the later books of the corpus) are blurred. A non-typical use of the Piel is attested in 2 Chr 29,34. Here, no context of conflict is involved, but one of cultic rituals. The text reads ויחזקום אחיהם הלוים “their relatives, the Levites *supported/helped* them (i.e. the priests)”.

⁴⁴ CEB; ESV; NJB; NJPS; NRSV; NIV; J.N. OSWALT, *The Book of Isaiah*. Chapters 1–39 (Grand Rapids, MI 1996) 416; H. WILDBERGER, *Isaiah 13–27* (Minneapolis, MN 1997) 391; B.S. CHILDS, *Isaiah*. A Commentary (Louisville, KY 2001) 156; J. BLENKINSOPP, *Isaiah 1–39*. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary (New Haven, CT 2008) 336.

⁴⁵ See, for example, CLINES, *DCH Vol. 3*, 186.

⁴⁶ For example, VAN DER WOUDE, “חזק *hzq*”, 403.

⁴⁷ HESSE, “חזק *chāzaq*”, 301.

⁴⁸ O.P. ROBERTSON, *The Books of Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah* (Grand Rapids, MI 1990) 86; R.L. SMITH, *Micah-Malachi*. (Dallas, TX 1998) 81; and CEB.

in a context of political force often has the sense of “x strengthens y politically”. It is therefore possible to interpret Isa 22,21ab as a conceptual blend “with your sash I will strengthen him”. Implied is the notion that the sash of Shebna, which had been removed from him, will be wrapped around Eliakim. What is profiled by the linguistic construction (i.e. the Piel of חזק) is that God will strengthen Eliakim politically by giving him the symbol of authority: the sash. The frame of “God will strengthen Eliakim” is further elaborated in Isa 22,22-23. It must be acknowledged that the semantic parallelism appears to favor the “traditional reading”. However, my proposal tries to illustrate how a relatively frequent sense of a Piel construction and a conceptual blend may make the postulation of an additional sense for חזק redundant.

When a king strengthens his own political power, a Hitp is used (#14)⁴⁹. A fixed expression with the preposition עם is also attested (#15). It has the sense of “to strongly support”.

12	וַיַּחֲזַק יְהוָה אֶת עֲגִלּוֹן מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל	And YHWH <i>strengthened</i> Eglon, king of Moab against Israel (Judg 3,12).
13	וְהִלְבַּשְׁתִּיו כְּתֹנֶתְךָ וְאַבְנֶטְךָ אֲחֻזְקִנוּ	And I will clothe him with your robe and with your sash <i>I will strengthen</i> him (Isa 22,21).
14	וַיִּתְחַזַּק הַמֶּלֶךְ רְחֹבְעָם בִּירוּשָׁלַם וַיִּמְלֹךְ	King Rehoboam <i>established himself</i> in Jerusalem and reigned (2 Chr 12,13).
15	וְאַלֵּה רֹאשֵׁי הַגְּבוּרִים אֲשֶׁר לְדָוִד הַמִּתְחַזְּקִים עִמּוֹ בַּמַּלְכוּת	These are the chiefs of David’s warriors, who gave him <i>strong support</i> in his kingdom (1 Chr 11,10) ⁵⁰ .

c.iii Argumentative Force (21×)

If one considers the fact that shifts of senses typically take place from uses that are more concrete to abstract ones, this use of חזק is an extension from the concrete instances of physical power in bodily encounters to verbal ones. The first sub-category can be described as the power of persuasion. The construction that is used, viz. Qal plus על (#16)⁵¹, seems to be a direct derivation from the concrete use, viz. “to overpower” (see #9)⁵².

⁴⁹ See also 2 Sam 3,6; 2 Chr 1,1; 13,21; 17,1; 21,4 and 27,6.

⁵⁰ Also 2 Chr 16,9 and Dan 10,21. These constructions occur only in texts that are associated with Late Biblical Hebrew.

⁵¹ See also 2 Sam 24,4. In that case, the preposition אל is used. There are, however, other Hebrew manuscripts that read על.

⁵² See also Jer 20,7 where no preposition is used: חֲזַקְתִּי “you overpowered me”.

16	דבר המלך חזק על יואב	The king's word carried more weight than Joab's (lit. <i>overpowered or prevailed against Joab</i>) 1 Chr 21,4).
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In one instance, the verbal appeal of the speaker is described as “to be strong (Qal) on (על)” their audience to (#17), i.e. “they demanded from the people to ...”. In this case the agents are those who are in a more powerful position. In two other instances, a speaker “made it strong (Hiph) at (ב), i.e. urged the addressee... to...” (#18) ⁵³. In neither of these instances are the agents in more powerful positions than their addressees. This may explain the use of the preposition ב and not על.

17	ותחזק מצרים על העם למהר לשלחם מן הארץ	The Egyptians <i>demanded from</i> the people to hasten their departure from the land (Exod 12,33).
18	ותחזק בו לאכל לחם	She <i>urged</i> him to have a meal (2 Kgs 4,8).

The second subcategory involves an image metaphor. It describes the heart of an addressee that does not want to heed to appeals that have been made to him ⁵⁴. These expressions are solely confined to the Book of Exodus ⁵⁵ and refer exclusively to the heart of Pharaoh. Due to the negative connotation of the attitude, the expressions have not been translated traditionally as “strengthened”, but “The Pharaoh's heart *was hardened*” (#19) or “God *hardened* the heart of Pharaoh” (#20).

19	ויחזק לב פרעה	Pharaoh's heart <i>was hardened</i> (Exod 7,13) ⁵⁶ .
20	ויחזק יהוה את לב פרעה	YHWH <i>hardened</i> the heart of Pharaoh (Exod 9,12) ⁵⁷ .

⁵³ The BHS has a Qal form of the verb in Judg 19,4. It is, however, pointed out that there are many Hebrew manuscripts that have a Hiph form.

⁵⁴ Jeremiah, with reference to the people of Judah, uses a similar type of image metaphor when he observes: חזקו פניהם מסלע מאנו לשוב “They have made their faces harder than rock; they have refused to turn back”.

⁵⁵ The only instance outside of Exodus of the verbal construction is in Josh 11,20. See also Ezek 2,4.

⁵⁶ Also Exod 7,2; 8,15; 9,35.

⁵⁷ Also Exod 4,21; 10,20.27; 11,10; 14,8.17.

d. Physical Effort (Typically with One's Hands) to Establish Contact and Control (42+16+8+5=71×)

This category of use seems to be directly derived from the most concrete bodily function(s) of חזק referred to above, viz. “to make strong (by implication one's hands) onto,” i.e. “to grasp, hold”. It has a conventionalized form, viz. the Hiph of חזק + the preposition ב.

d.i. Physical Effort in Taking Hold of or Grasping x (42×)

In its physical sense (42×) a party in control takes hold of another entity (#21)⁵⁸. In 11 instances, the preposition ב is lacking (#22)⁵⁹.

21	וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל מֹשֶׁה שְׁלַח יָדְךָ וְאַחֲזוּ בִּזְנֵב וַיִּשְׁלַח יָדוֹ וַיַּחֲזֹק בּוֹ וַיְהִי לְמִטָּה בַּכֹּפֹ	Then YHWH said to Moses, “Reach out your hand, and seize it by the tail” — so he reached out his hand and <i>grasped it</i> , and it became a staff in his hand — (Exod 4,4)
22	קֶשֶׁת וְכִידָן יַחֲזִיקוּ אֲכֹרֵי הוּא וְלֹא יִרְחָמוּ	They <i>grasp</i> the bow and the javelin, they are cruel and have no mercy, (Jer 6,23).

d.ii. This Sub-Category Represents a Metaphor of Mapping the Effort of a Physical Controlling Entity onto that of an Emotion or Feeling, i.e. Gripped by x (5×).

Fear or pain may “take hold of” or “grasp” somebody (#23).

23	צָרָה הַחֲזִיקָתָנוּ חֵיל כִּילֹדָה	Anguish has <i>taken hold</i> of us, pain as of a woman in labor (Jer 6,24) ⁶⁰ .
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d.iii. This Sub-Category also Represents a Metaphor. In This Case, Physical Effort of a Controlling Subject is Mapped to the Domain of Mental Effort, i.e. a Mental Grip on x (16×).

Figurative extensions of the above prototypical concrete sense include instances where a person in power “holds” somebody back from leaving

⁵⁸ Gen 19,16; Deut 22,25; 25,11; Judg 7,20; 16,26; 19,25,29; 1 Sam 15,27; 17,35; 2 Sam 1,11; 2,16; 3,29; 13,1; 15,5 (text-critical issue); 1 Kgs 1,50; 2,28; 2 Sam 2,12; 4,27; 2 Chr 28,15 (take care of people); Job 8,15; Prov 7,13; 26,17; Isa 4,1; Jer 31,32; 50,33; Zech 8,23. While in all these cases a human is the controlling agent, in Job 18,9 it is a snare. The preposition that is used is also על and not ב.

⁵⁹ Also Ps 35,2; Neh 4,10.11.15; Jer 50,42; Nah 3,14b. In all the latter instances, reference is made to a material object, typically a weapon, which is taken hold of. In Isa 41,9; Dan 11:21; Zech 8,23c and 14,13 this is not the case. In 2 Chr 4,5, the controlling agent is a moulded container (“the sea”) that “holds” a certain amount of water.

⁶⁰ Jer 8,21; 49,24; 50,43 and Mic 4,9.

(#24). A lesser party may also join ⁶¹ or hold onto a stronger party (#25) ⁶². Relatively often, someone may hold fast onto an abstract notion (#26) ⁶³.

24	כי אם מאן אתה לשלח ועודך מחזיק בם	For if you refuse to let them go and still <i>hold them</i> (Exod 9,2) ⁶⁴ .
25	ואמרו על אשר עזבו את־יהוה אלהיהם ויחזקו באלהים אחרים	Then they will say, 'Because they have forsaken YHWH their God, ..., and <i>hold onto</i> other gods' (1 Kgs 9,9).
26	ומחזיקים בבריתי	and <i>hold fast</i> my covenant (Isa 56,4).

d.iv. The “Support” Implications of a Physical Gesture Became Entrenched as the Sense of a Construction, i.e. to Support Somebody (8×)

When a stronger party takes hold of somebody's hand, a support frame is typically involved; hence the postulation of a “support” sense of this use of the construction (#27) ⁶⁵. This conceptualization overlaps with the more frequent use of חזק in the Piel (See #35-36).

27	אין מנהל לה מכל בנים ילדה ואין מחזיק בידה מכל בנים גדלה	Among all the children she bore, there was none to guide her; among all the children she reared, there was none <i>to take her by the hand</i> (Isa 51,18).
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⁶¹ Neh 20,30.

⁶² 2 Chr 7,22.

⁶³ Job 2,3,9; 27,6; Prov 3,18; 4,13; Neh 5,16; Isa 27,5; 56,2,6; 64,6 (God's hand); Jer 8,5; Mic 7,18 reads (without the preposition): לא החזיק לעד אפו “He does not *hold onto* his anger forever” (CEB).

⁶⁴ Judg 7,8.

⁶⁵ Job 8,20; Isa 41,13; 42,6; 45,1 and Ezek 16,49. In Lev 25,35b it appears as if יד has been elided; see 25,35a. In Gen 21,18, a unique construction is used: החזיק את־ידך בו which literally reads “make strong your hand on him”. Translations render the construction as “hold him fast with your hand” (ESV and NRSV); “hold him by the hand” (NIV and NJPS); “take him by the hand” (CEB and NLT) and “hold him safe” (NJB). V.P. HAMILTON, *The Book of Genesis*. Chapters 18–50 (Grand Rapids, MI 1995) 96, proposes “steady him with your hand”. In the same line of thought, E.A. SPIESER, *Genesis* (New Haven, CT 1964 [2008]) 156 suggests “and comfort him”. He remarks: “Literally ‘make your hand firm upon him’, which is idiomatic for lending support and encouragement; the traditional ‘seize him by his hand’, or the like, would require ‘get hold of his hand’ in Heb”. If one considers that this appeal applies after the boy was picked up, I regard the proposed translation solutions by NJB, Hamilton and Speiser to be more justifiable than those proposed by the other translations.

1.2. Artefacts (1+63=64×)

a. Physical Force of an Artefact (1×)

Related to §IV.1.1.b, are instances where an object “appears” to exerts physical force (#28) or disallow any movement ⁶⁶.

28	ועתה אל תתלוצצו פן יחזקו מוסריכם כי כלה ונחרצה שׁמעתי מאת אדני יהוה צבאות על כל הארץ	Now therefore do not scoff, or your chains will <i>become tighter</i> ; for I have heard a decree of destruction from the Lord YHWH of hosts upon the whole land (Isa 28,22) ⁶⁷ .
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b. Human Made Artefacts are Provided with the Ability to Withstand the Onslaughts of External Forces, i.e. Strengthened or Repaired (10+53=63×)

b.i. Strengthened

The actors in this frame are humans, who are typically skilled or able to provide constructions (e.g. a city, a city wall, a temple, or a ship) with the physical ability to withstand the onslaught of external forces. These forces may be hostile forces (#29) ⁶⁸ or the laws of the forces of nature (#30) ⁶⁹.

29	וַיַּחֲזַק אֶת הַמְּצֻרוֹת	He made the fortresses <i>strong</i> (2 Chr 11,11).
30	בַּמַּסְמְרוֹת וּבַמִּקְבּוֹת יַחֲזִיקוּם וְלֹא יִפֹּק	With hammer and nails, they <i>fasten them</i> so that it will not fall over (Jer 10,4).

b.ii. Repaired

In a number of instances, the abilities of artifacts to withstand the forces of nature are restored (#31) ⁷⁰. Typically, the Piel is used in all the above-mentioned instances. However, the Hiph is also used, mainly in Nehemiah ⁷¹.

⁶⁶ The adjective of the root is used to describe (metonymically) the ability of a sword to exert force (Isa 27,1). In both Isa 27,1 and 28,22, a human or divine agent is implied. In the case of Isa 28,22, it may also be asked if it is the artefact itself that exerts force or rather an implied human subject.

⁶⁷ In 2 Sam 18,9 it might be argued that the branches of the tree disallowed Absalom any movement. Problematic is the fact that the head of Absalom (“his head”) is the subject of the clause, and not the tree.

⁶⁸ Also 2 Chr 11,12; 26,9; Ps 147,13; Jer 10,4; Nah 3,14.

⁶⁹ Isa 33,23; 41,7; 54,2. DE BLOIS (2017: unpublished entry of חזק in the SDBH) describes these as instances of a “causative action whereby humans ensure that an object cannot be moved from its place”.

⁷⁰ 2 Kgs 12,7-9.13.15; 22,5.6; 1 Chr 26,27; 2 Chr 24,5.12; 29,3; 32,5; 34,8.4.

⁷¹ See Neh 3,4(3×).5-7.8(2×).9.10(2×).11-16.17(2×).18-22.23(2×).25.27-28.29(2×).30(2×).31-32; Ezek 27,9.27. In Jer 51.12, it is not a construction that is strengthened, but a guard post.

31	והם יחזקו את בדק הבית לכל אשר ימצא שם בדק	And let them <i>repair</i> the damage of house wherever any damage is discovered (2 Kgs 12,6).
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1.3 Physical Force of an Event (8×)

Events may also be perceived as exerting physical force. In most cases reference is made (in the Qal) to a strong, i.e. a severe, famine (#32) ⁷².

32	ויחזק הרעב בארץ מצרים	And the famine was <i>severe</i> in the land of Egypt (Gen 41,56).
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2. The Ability to Have Mental Strength in Challenging Situations (40+12+13= 65/290)

a. Mental Strength (i.e. Courage) in a Frame of Physical or (Socio-) Political Conflict (or Challenges) (40×)

In the Qal, most instances are appeals that are directed to addressees, in the wake of ensuing battles, to “be brave” ⁷³ (#33) ⁷⁴. A more elaborate fixed expression with the root אִמַּץ is also attested (#34) ⁷⁵ relatively often in an “ensuing battle” frame. In the Piel, someone may “be encouraged” (#35) before a challenging military undertaking ⁷⁶. The expression, “x strengthened someone’s hands”, is used to refer to “x encouraged someone” (#36) ⁷⁷. In the Hitp, the construction has a reflexive sense, i.e.

⁷² Also Gen 41,57; 47,20; 2 Kgs 25,3 and Jer 52,6. In a military frame, a battle is also described as being strong, i.e. severe, in 2 Kgs 3,26. A battle may also be intensified, as, for example, with a Hiph (2 Sam 11,25). The adjectival form of the root may refer to the strength of a famine (1 Kgs 18,2), an illness (1 Kgs 17,17), a wind (Exod 10,19; 1 Kgs 19,11), or a battle (1 Sam 14,52; 2 Sam 11,15). In Mal 3,13, God says חֲזָקוּ עָלַי דְּבָרֵיכֶם “your words about/against me were harsh”.

⁷³ The challenging situations may also be of a political nature (see 2 Sam 2,7 and 16,21).

⁷⁴ Also 2 Sam 10,12; 13,28; 1 Chr 19,13; 2 Chr 25,8.

⁷⁵ Also Deut 31,7; 31,23; Josh 1,6,9,18; 10,25; 2 Chr 32,7. The Piel in Deut 3,28 has a factitive sense, i.e. “to encourage somebody”.

⁷⁶ Also Deut 1,38 and 2 Sam 11,25. In Ps 64,6 a combat image frame is blended with the actions of evildoers. In Nah 2,2a, an addressee is summoned: חֲזָק מְתָנִים, “strengthen (your) loins” and to “marshall (all your) strength” in the wake of an attack from hostile forces.

⁷⁷ In Neh 6,9, Nehemiah appeals to the God: חֲזָק אֶת־יָדַי, “strengthen my hands”, i.e. “give me courage” to rebuild the city walls. In Neh 2,18, Nehemiah’s audience reacts to his uplifting speech with the words וּבָנִינוּ, “let us start rebuilding.” The narrator then recounts רִחְזְקוּ יְדֵיהֶם לְטוֹבָה, “and they strengthened their hands, i.e. plucked up courage, for the good work”. See also Ezra 1,6 and 6,22. Job 4,3 is an atypical use. Since encouragement to face everyday challenges is referred to in Job 4,3, it represents an atypical use.

someone plucks up courage (#37) to face a battle ⁷⁸. Other challenging situations may also be involved ⁷⁹.

33	ואתם חזקו ואל ירפו ידיכם כי יש שכר לפעלתכם	But you, <i>be brave</i> ! And, do not lose heart (lit. do not let your hands be weak) ⁸⁰ , for your work shall be rewarded (2 Chr 15,7).
34	חזקו ואמצו אל תיראו ואל תערצו מפניהם כי יהוה אלהיך הוא ההלך עמך	<i>Be bold</i> and strong; have no fear or dread of them, because it is YHWH your God who goes with you (Deut 31,6).
35	יהושע בן נון העמד לפניך הוא יבא שמה אתו חזק כי הוא ינחלנה את ישראל	Joshua son of Nun, your assistant, he shall enter there; <i>encourage him</i> , for he is the one who will secure Israel's possession of it (Deut 1,38).
36	ועל בעלי שכם אשר חזקו את ידיו להרג את אחיו	And on the lords of Shechem, who <i>encouraged/abetted</i> him (lit.: strengthened his hands) to kill his brothers (Judg 9,24) ⁸¹ .
37	ויתחזק העם איש ישראל ויספו לערך מלחמה במקום אשר ערכו שם ביום הראשון	The army, the men of Israel, <i>took courage</i> ⁸² , and again formed the battle line in the same place where they had formed it on the first day (Judg 20,22).

b. Mental Strength in a Call to Trust the God (12×)

The constructions and ensuing senses of the more physical realm are also used in a frame of humans in interaction with the deity. The expressions used are often in the Qal (#38) ⁸³ with constructions (#39-40) that show some similarities to those attested in §IV.2.a ⁸⁴.

⁷⁸ See also 1 Sam 4,9; 30,6; and 2 Chr 25,11. Only 1 Sam 4,9 is an appeal. The rest of the examples are descriptions of what somebody did.

⁷⁹ See 2 Chr 15,8; 23,1; and Ezra 7,28. In 2 Chr 13,7 and 13,8 the Hitp + לפני construction has the sense of "to show oneself courageous in the face of the pressure that somebody else may put on you". In English, one could translate the construction as "maintain yourself before x" or "resist x".

⁸⁰ In Judg 7,11 it is said: ושמעת מהידברו ואחר תחזקנה ידיך וירדת במחנה, "and you will hear what they say, and after that, you will have the courage to attack the camp" (lit. "your hands will be strong and you shall go down to the camp").

⁸¹ In Ezra 1,6; 6,22; Neh 2,18 and 6,9, the physical challenges are building activities, i.e. the rebuilding of the temple (Ezra) and walls of Jerusalem (Neh).

⁸² See also the ESV, NJB and NJPS. In contrast, see the CEB.

⁸³ See also Isa 42,6; Hag 2,4 (3×).

⁸⁴ Two instances of the Piel are attested: Isa 35,3 and 41,7a. The latter belongs only marginally to this frame. In this instance it is said: ויחזק חרש אתיצרך, "the craftsman encouraged the metalworker". God is profiling the futility of trusting in idols to his audience by reminding them that idols are the products of teams of human artisans.

38	אמרו לנמהרי לב חזקו אל תיראו הנה אלהיכם נקם יבוא גמול אלהים הוא יבוא וישעם	And say to the faint-hearted, “ <i>Take courage</i> ⁸⁵ ! Do not be afraid. Here is your God, vengeance is coming, divine retribution; he is coming to save you” (Isa 35,4).
39	קוה אל יהוה חזק ויאמץ לבך וקוה אל יהוה	Wait for YHWH; <i>be strong</i> , and let your heart take courage; wait for YHWH! (Ps 27,14) ⁸⁶ .
40	אל תיראו תחזקנה ידיכם	Do not be afraid, <i>take heart</i> (lit. let your hands be strong) (Zech 8,13) ⁸⁷ .

c. Mental Strength in a Call to Act (Im)morally (13×)

A third frame in which reference is made to mental strength is a moral one, i.e. “to be strong” is “to be steadfast in keeping God’s commands”. The constructions used are again similar to those used in the physical realm (§IV.2.a). Most uses are appeals in the Qal (#41-42 ⁸⁸). A construction עשה חזק is attested. While it appears to be non-compositional in #43, this is not the case in #44. The rare uses of the Piel in this frame are all with the construction “x strengthened the hands of y” (#45) ⁸⁹.

41	אנכי הלך בדרך כל־הארץ וחזקת והיית לאיש ושמרת את־משמרת יהוה אלהיך ללכת בדרכיו לשמר חקתיו מצותיו ומשפטיו ועדותיו ככתוב בתורת משה למען תשכיל את כל־אשר תעשה ואת כל־אשר תפנה שם:	² “I am about to go the way of all the earth. <i>Be steadfast</i> ⁹⁰ and show you are a man, ³ and keep the charge of YHWH your God, walking in his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his ordinances, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, so that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn (1 Kgs 2,2).
42	רק חזק ואמץ מאד לשמר לעשות ככל־התורה ...	Only be very <i>steadfast</i> and strong, in taking care to act in accordance with all the law.... (Josh 1,7).

⁸⁵ Most English translations, render the expression as “be strong” (ESV, CEB, NET, NIV, NJB, NJPS, NLT, NRSV). In contrast, see BLENKINSOPP, *Isaiah 1–39*, 455.

⁸⁶ Also Ps 31,25.

⁸⁷ Also Zech 8,9 and Ezek 22,14. In Isa 35,3, the same idiomatic expression is used, but with the Piel of חזק.

⁸⁸ 1 Chr 22,13; 28,20. Cf. the parallel text in Kings (#31). In Josh 23,6 an appeal (in Qal) is made to addressees “to be strong/steadfast” in taking care to observe laws, and in Deut 12,23 “not to do something wrong”. See also 1 Chr 28,7. 2 Chr 31,4 reads למען יהוה יחזקו בתורת יהוה, “So that they might *be strong* in the law”, i.e. “devote themselves to the law”.

⁸⁹ In Jer 23,14 and Ezek 13,22 a frame of (im)moral conduct is involved.

⁹⁰ Most translations read “be strong” (e.g., ESV, CEB, ISV, NIV, NJB, NJPS).

43	ראה עתה כי יהוה בחר בך לבנות בית למקדש חזק ועשה	Take heed now, for YHWH has chosen you to build a house as the sanctuary; <i>be steadfast and act</i> (1 Chr 28,10).
44	חזקו ועשו ויהי יהוה עם הטוב	<i>Be steadfast in carrying out your duties</i> (lit. be steadfast and do), and may YHWH be with you (2 Chr 19,11) ⁹¹ .
45	ובנבאי ירושלם ראיתי שערורה נאוף והלך בשקר וחזקו ידי מרעים	Among the prophets of Jerusalem, I have seen a more shocking thing: they commit adultery and walk in lies; they <i>encourage</i> (lit. strengthen the hands of) evildoers (Jer 23,14).

A distinction has been made in §IV.2 between a frame of physical challenges, one of calls to trust in God and one of calls to act (im)morally. For the purposes of this study, this has been a heuristic procedure. If one considers that Josh 1,7 (#42) is part and parcel of a series of appeals (Josh 1,6.9.18) to be “brave and strong” in the face of a physical challenge, one is inclined to infer that these sub-categories should rather be lumped together. However, it can also be argued that #42 is rather an implication of the conceptual frame of the speech community that physical (military) strength is provided by the Deity – in particular to invade (Deut 11,8) or keep (Ezra 9,12). It is therefore dependent on keeping God’s commandments ⁹². The use of חזק in #42 does not necessarily imply a lack of conceptual distinctions between mental courage in the face of physical and moral challenges. The lexeme itself is vague and the context elicits the conceptualization needed. It is, on the one hand, indeed the case that constructions, e.g. חזק ואמץ and חזק and the Hebrew equivalent of “let your hands be strong”, are attested in all three of the sub-categories distinguished in §IV.2. On the other hand, it may be argued that the construction used in §IV.2a (see, e.g. #34), differs slightly from the one in §IV.2b (see, e.g. #39). Furthermore, the construction חזק ועשה is attested only in §IV.2c. The latter constructions might hint at a possible (and emerging) distinct concept, i.e. mental strength to act morally.

V. CONCLUSIONS

If one now considers the uses of the verbal root חזק in the Hebrew Bible, it can, firstly, be postulated that the most central sense, in terms

⁹¹ See also Ezra 10,4. The Hiph of the construction in Dan 11,32 can be interpreted as “They will show strong resistance”.

⁹² See also 1 Kgs 2,2.

of which all other uses and senses can be explained, is (indeed) that of the concrete bodily ability to perform tasks that require an effort and/or force.

Secondly, if one considers the wide and frequent use (71×) of *חזק* in the Hiph (plus *כ* in 60 instances), it is evident that this construction is another typical way of referring to “take hold of” or “grasping” (§IV.1.1.d.i) in BH ⁹³. Furthermore, three figurative sense extensions can be explained in terms of this newly developed specialized sense (see §IV.1.1.d.ii-iv).

Thirdly, if one now considers high frequency and breadth of distribution, as well as the number of sub-senses that can be explained by means of each of the categories, three prototypical senses can be distinguished ⁹⁴:

- 1) Physical, military and/or political force in conflict frames (18+26=44×, see §IV.1.1.c.i-ii) ⁹⁵;
- 2) Mental strength in frames of physical conflict (40×, see §IV.2.a) ⁹⁶;
- 3) Physical effort in taking hold of or grasping x (42×, see §IV.1.1.d.i).

Fourthly, a formal configuration, in addition to the Qal imperative of *חזק*, which could be associated exclusively with the concept of mental strength, is the BH equivalent of “to have strong hands” (Qal) or “to strengthen someone’s hands” (Piel). It is ironic ⁹⁷ that this image metaphor, which derives from the domain of bodily strength, is used only to refer to mental strength (§IV.2.a-c).

Fifthly, the application of our cognitive semantically based working hypothesis gave us a clearer picture of the constructions that are typically associated with mental strength. This has paved the way to establish with greater probability the concrete senses of the ambiguous uses in, e.g., #1, #6 and #11. Even some traditional readings of the lemma could be challenged (see, e.g., #13 and #41) ⁹⁸.

⁹³ See also *אחז* (58×) and to a lesser degree *תפח* (49×).

⁹⁴ Although the category: “the reparation of human artifacts” occurs 53×, 35 of those instances are in Nehemiah 3. Another category that occurs relative frequently (20×), but which has a very narrow distribution (13× in Exodus) is the application of verbal force to persuade or to give into persuasion. Neither of these two categories with such a restricted distribution is regarded as a prototypical use of *חזק*.

⁹⁵ In terms of this “concrete” sense, the extension to “mental strength in a conflict frame”, as well as the shift to “persuasive force in a verbal argument frame”, can be explained.

⁹⁶ Two extensions can be explained in terms of this sense: see §IV.2.b and §IV.2.c.

⁹⁷ In the cases where reference is clearly made to military strength, it is said that God made someone’s arms strong (Ezek 30,24,25). Also, perhaps, Hos 7,15.

⁹⁸ As expected, not all 290× uses of *חזק* in the corpus could be neatly accommodated within the categories that I have distinguished. Non-prototypical rare uses, in which the senses are relatively clear, are 2 Sam 18,9; Job 4,3; 2 Chr 28,15; 29,34; Ezek 7,13, Jer 51,12 and Mal 3,13. Furthermore, this study is not the last word about *חזק* or the concept “strength” in the Hebrew Bible. Despite pointing to a few instances that appear

This study illustrates that the senses of the verbal root חזק are related and can be explained in a principled manner. Many of the principles are not new for traditional historical-philological semanticists. However, much of what can be regarded as “common sense” has been confirmed and/or refined by insights from the field of cognitive semantics: e.g., sense categories do not represent a singular linear extension from concrete to abstract; figurative extensions and blends are pervasive, but not random; extensions cannot be predicted, but they can be explained.

This study has shown that extensions of the senses of the verbal root חזק are clustered around three prototypes, two of which represent a figurative mapping from concrete to abstract, and one that represents the conventionalization of a formal pattern. The latter extension itself — which became through frequency of use a prototype — derives from the concrete bodily sense that is not attested very frequently in the corpus. Furthermore, each of the three prototypes generates its own concrete to abstract figurative mappings and blends. Each sense category also has its own prototypical and less-prototypical members. Some members may even belong to two categories, e.g. Ezek 3,14.

Representing the relationships between all the senses as a mere list, or in the worst case (as many existing lexicons do), in terms of root formations, do not do justice to the complexities of linguistic meaning. The input to any type of lexicon should at least try to reflect some of these realities of the polysemous senses of חזק.

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to occur only in texts associated with Late Biblical Hebrew, this study did not consider systematically the uses of the concept “strength” in terms of the diachronic cline of the corpus or its use in particular sub-corpora or literary types. Such an investigation may shed some light on the alternation of prepositions in parallel texts (e.g. 2 Sam 24,4 and 1 Chr 21,4); why the prep כ is lacking in Neh 4,10; Ps 35,2; Isa 41,9, etc.; why the Hiph is used in Neh 3,4 but the Piel in 2 Kgs 12,6 etc. Furthermore, no systematic attention was given to all the morphological realizations of חזק, or other lemmas that are related to the semantic fields of physical and mental strength. And, no evidence from texts or iconographical material from the world of the Bible has been taken into account.

SUMMARY

Representing the senses of the verbal root חזק as a list or, as many existing lexicons do, in terms of root formations, does not do justice to the polysemy of this verbal root. Basic insights from cognitive semantics — many of which can be linked up with the “common sense” wisdom of traditional historical-philological semantics — are used to argue that the extensions of the senses of חזק tend to cluster around three prototypes, two of which represent a mapping from concrete to abstract, and one the conventionalization of a formal pattern. Each of the three prototypes generates its own concrete to figurative mappings and conceptual blends.

THE RUINED VINEYARD MOTIF IN ISAIAH 1–39: INSIGHTS FROM COGNITIVE LINGUISTICS

The most well-known depiction of viticulture in Isaiah, and perhaps all of the HB/OT, occurs in 5,1-7¹. In this extended parable², many resonate with the experience of the vine keeper in verses 1-4. As the vine keeper's labor over his beloved vineyard results in putrid grapes, God's anguish over Israel's injustice is palpable to most readers. The experiences behind verses 5-6, however, are more alien: allowing hedges to be removed, walls to be breached, and the vineyard to be trampled amidst military disruption³. The prophets of ancient Judah and Israel, however, embedded as they were in their eastern Mediterranean society, were mindful of the social significance of vines and their vulnerability during times of war. In order to illuminate this reality, this article will survey the motif of vine destruction in Isaiah 1–39 (5,5-6; 7,23; 16,8-9; 24,7; 32,12)⁴ in light of its symbolic potency within ancient Israel through the assistance of Cognitive Linguistics — first by considering *relations* within utterances

¹ Reconstructions of viticulture in ancient Israel often use Isa 5,1-7. See. e.g., V.H. MATTHEWS, "Treading the Winepress: Actual and Metaphorical Viticulture in the Ancient Near East", *Food and Drink in the Biblical Worlds* (eds. A. BRENNER – J.W. VAN HENTEN) (Semeia 86; Atlanta, GA 1999) 19-32; C.E. WALSH, *The Fruit of the Vine. Viticulture in Ancient Israel* (HSM 60; Winona Lake, IN 2000).

² Debate surrounds the form of Isa 5,1-7. For arguments that this is a parable of some sort, see G.T. SHEPPARD, "More on Isaiah 5:1-7 as a Juridical Parable", *CBQ* 44 (1982) 45-47; J.T. WILLIS, "Genre of Isaiah 5:1-7", *JBL* 96 (1997) 337-362; G.A. YEE, "A Form-Critical Study of Isaiah 5:1-7 as a Song and a Juridical Parable", *CBQ* 43 (1981) 30-40. See, however, R. BARTELMUS, "Beobachtungen zur literarischen Struktur des sog. Weinberglieds (Jes 5,1-7): Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der formgeschichtlichen Methode bei der Interpretation von Texten aus dem corpus propheticum", *ZAW* 110.1 (1998) 50-66, who observes that formal parallels between 5,1-7 and other parables are lacking.

³ YEE ("A Form-Critical", 38) identifies invasions by Assyria as the historical backdrop for these verses that anticipate judgment. See also G.R. WILLIAMS, "Frustrated Expectations in Isaiah V 1-7, A Literary Interpretation", *VT* 35 (1985) 464.

⁴ Although diachronic concerns receive some attention, Isaiah 1–39 serves as a literary unit for considering how the concept of the ruined vineyard operates there within. There are no references to ruined vineyards after chapter 32, but I have extended the corpus through to chapter 39 because, as is noted at the end of the essay, the prospect of eating from vineyards in 37,30 resonates with the ruined vineyard motif set during the Assyrian era in the first half of the book (esp. 5,1-7). A different division of the book (e.g., 1–33) would not alter the argument of this essay. For a helpful orientation to Cognitive Linguistics and its use in Biblical Studies, see E. VAN WOLDE, *Reframing Biblical Studies. When Language and Text Meet Culture, Cognition, and Context* (Winona Lake, IN 2009).

and then *semantic domains* that inform the ruined vineyard motif ⁵. It will become evident that the centrality of the vine within society and its correspondence with peace and joy make the vine's destruction amidst war a powerful symbol in Isaiah 1–39 for capturing the weighty reality of divine, violent judgment.

I. THE RUINED VINEYARD AND RELATIONS WITHIN UTTERANCES

As a more marginal motif within Isaiah 1–39, research on the ruined vineyard has been limited primarily to identifying the place of particular passages within a stream of linguistic traditions. Passages containing שמיר and שית ("thorns and thistles"; 5,6; 7,23; cf. 32,12 [קוץ שמיר]) — terms occurring only within the book of Isaiah (cf. 7,24–25; 9,17; 10,17; 27,4) ⁶ — are either attributed to the prophet Isaiah ⁷ or later scribes utilizing the prophet's traditions ⁸. The depiction of a breach (פרץ) in a vineyard's walls (גדר) as a metaphor for Israel in Isa 5,5–6 and Psalm 80 — an exilic or post-exilic psalm — leads some to date the passages to the same era ⁹. Isaiah 16,8–9 and Jer 48,32 both depict weeping (בכה) over the vines (נפץ) of Jazer (יעזר) and Sibmah (שבמה), so discussion revolves around whether Isa 16,8–9 is a base text for Jeremiah or shares a later

⁵ If this study were limited to explicating the metaphor of the vineyard within 5,1–7 or 27,2–6 — extended parables — the application of metaphor theory to those texts would be an additional way Cognitive Linguistics could aid this study. See especially Harshav's notion that *fields of reference* develop and interact within a text to create a textual world within which an extended metaphor can be grasped as they activate "world-cognitions": B. HARSHAV, "Metaphors and Frames of Reference. With Examples from Eliot, Rilke, Mayakovsky, Mandelshtam, Pound, Creely, Amichai, and the New York Times", ID., *Explorations in Poetics* (Stanford, CA 2007) 32–75.

⁶ 1 QHa XVI, 25 uses שמיר ושית metaphorically to contrast with a state of well-being. For more on this expression in Isaiah, see K. NIELSEN, *There is Hope for a Tree*. The Tree as Metaphor in Isaiah (JSOTSup 65; Sheffield 1989) 104–106.

⁷ On 5,5–6, see H. WILDBERGER, *Isaiah 1–12* (trans. T.H. TRAPP) (Minneapolis, MN 1991) 178–179; A.J. BJØRNDAL, "Zur Frage der Echtheit von Jesaja 1,2–3; 1,4–7 und 5,1–7", *NTT* 83 (1982) 89–100. On 7,23, see J.M. ROBERTS, *First Isaiah* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN 2015) 126; J. BLENKINSOPP, *Isaiah 1–39* (AB; New Haven, CT 2000) 236. On 32,12–13, see G. FOHRER, *Das Buch Jesaja*, vol. 2 (Zürich 1962) 127–131; J. VERMEYLEN, *Du prophète Isaïe à l'apocalyptique*. Isaïe, I–XXXV, miroir d'un demi-millénaire d'expérience religieuse en Israël, vol.1 (Paris 1977) 425–426.

⁸ On Isa 5,5–6, see B.S. CHILDS, *Isaiah* (OTL; Louisville, KY 2001) 241. On 7,23, see M. SWEENEY, *Isaiah 1–39 with an Introduction to Prophetic Literature* (FOTL; Grand Rapids, MI 1996) 155–159 [Josiah]; BARTH, *Die Jesaja-Worte in der Josiazeit* (Vluyt 1977) 287 [exile]; U. BECKER, *Jesaja-von der Botschaft zum Buch* (Göttingen 1997) 34–35 [post-exile].

⁹ E.g., BECKER, *Jesaja*, 132–133; VERMEYLEN, *Du prophète Isaïe*, 159–168.

provenance ¹⁰. Isaiah 24,7 is explained as a post-exilic adaptation from a verse like Joel 1,10, which also contains the terms אבֹל, אִמְלִל, and תִּירוֹשׁ ¹¹. Although these tradition-linguistic observations are helpful, there are concepts more fundamental to understanding the motif that remain underdeveloped. This article utilizes several tools from Cognitive Linguistics — *relations* and *semantic domains* — to establish a stronger conceptual framework for understanding instances of the ruined vineyard motif in Isaiah 1–39. In this section, the notion of *relations* will be applied to the topic at hand.

In Cognitive Linguistics, *relations* is a notion that derives from the premise that an entity is understood amidst an interrelated web of mental relations. As an everyday example, if someone said, “I forgot my shoe”, an understanding of the concept [Shoe] in this sentence emerges out of a web of mental relations. As for the concept [Shoe] in the abstract, the human mind naturally foregrounds (the profile) one aspect of [Shoe], namely the product — a sole with a non-enclosed covering — and understands it in relation to a backdrop (base), namely that it belongs on a foot. Within the sentence, the modifier “my”, as well as its relation to the verb (“forgot”), extends the network of relations involved in understanding the utterance. *Relations*, then, stems from the recognition that a linguistic expression is an external manifestation of an interrelated web of concepts.

As for the concept [VINE], it can be defined through the interrelationship between the foregrounded aspect of [VINE], referred to as its profile, and its background aspect, its base (Fig. 1) ¹².

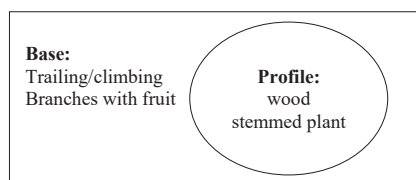


Figure 1 – Profile and Base of the concept [VINE]

Cognitive Linguistics also maps *relations* within phrases and clauses. Within clauses, there is interest in capturing the relationship between a subject — referred to as the trajector (tr), “the more prominent entity

¹⁰ For an early date, see SWEENEY, *Isaiah 1-39*, 248. For a later date, although acknowledging the use of an earlier source, see H. WILDBERGER, *Isaiah 13–27* (trans. T.H. TRAPP) (Minneapolis, MN 1997) 125; VERMEYLEN, *Du prophète Isaïe*, 304-308.

¹¹ WILDBERGER, *Isaiah 13–27*, 485.

¹² On profile and base, see J.R. TAYLOR, *Cognitive Grammar* (New York 2002) 192-195; VAN WOLDE, *Reframing Biblical Studies*, 105.

within the conceptualization of a relation”¹³ — and the object — referred to as the landmark (lm), the less prominent entity within the relation¹⁴. The next section will focus on relations within clauses.

1. שמיר ושית

Not only are שמיר and שית part of an Isaianic linguistic tradition, but their use within utterances takes place amidst an emphasis upon the absence of what is needed for a vineyard’s successful production. Isa 5,5b6c reads:

5b I will remove its hedge, and it will be burned up.	אסיר ¹⁶ משוכתו והיה לבער
5c I will breach its wall, and it will become trampled,	פרץ גדרו והיה למרמס
6a so I will make it a waste.	ואשיתו בתה
6b It will not be pruned; it will not be hoed,	לא יזמר ולא יעדר
6c and it will come up with thorns and thistles ¹⁵ .	ועלה שמיר ושית

Isaiah 5,5b and 5c parallel one another. The first colon of each line describes God (tr) separating the primary landmark (lmP; “hedge”, “wall”) from the secondary landmark (lmS; “vineyard”; see Fig. 2)¹⁷. The second colon in each line describes the results of the first colon’s actions, with the secondary landmark from the prior colon becoming its trajector (Fig. 3).

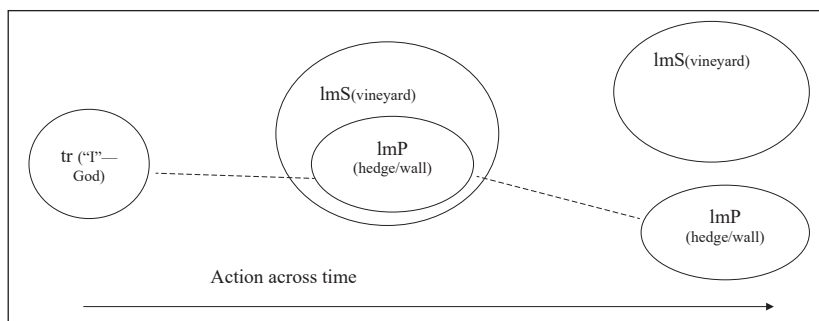


Figure 2 – Trajector separating primary landmark from secondary landmark in first colon of both Isa 5,5b and c

¹³ VAN WOLDE, *Reframing Biblical Studies*, 106.

¹⁴ See TAYLOR, *Cognitive Grammar*, 205-222; VAN WOLDE, *Reframing Biblical Studies*, 106-107, 171-176.

¹⁵ On vineyard as the subject of 6c, see WILLIAMSON, *Isaiah 1–5* (London 2006) 323.

¹⁶ The text reports the 1QIsa reading instead of the MT (הָסֵר).

¹⁷ On primary and secondary, see VAN WOLDE, *Reframing Biblical Studies*, 175-176. One can distinguish between primary and secondary by detecting what is necessary and unnecessary to complete a sentence.

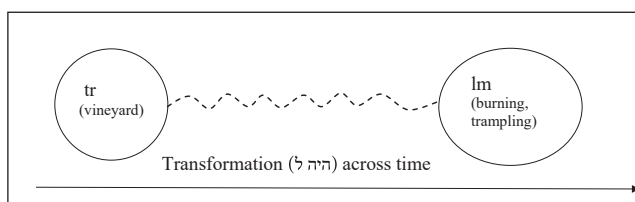


Figure 3 – Transformation resulting in second colon of both Isa 5,5b and c after protection removed in first colon

The conceptual logic, then, of 5,5b and c is that God (tr) will remove protective barriers (lmP) — hedge and wall — from the vineyard (lmS). As a result, the vineyard (tr) will be a context of burning and trampling (lm).

In verse 6, the lead clause *ואשיתו בתה* (“so I will make it a waste”) offers a summative statement about God’s plans to ruin his vineyard. The statement reverberates phonologically across the following lines in a way that unites 6a with 6b and c: *ואשית ... שמיר ושיח*. Destruction leads to thorns and thistles. Whereas the focus in 5b and c was upon the removal of protection, 6b emphasizes the absence of viticulture habits through negated passive verbal constructions: *לא יזמר ולא יעד*. Since the three verbs in 6a and b are imperfects (*אשית...יזמר ... יעד*), the *w^cqatal* in 6c (*ועלה*) is best understood as depicting the consequential action. A lack of pruning and hoeing (6b) results in the vineyard (tr) giving rise to *שמיר ושיח* (lm; see Fig. 4).

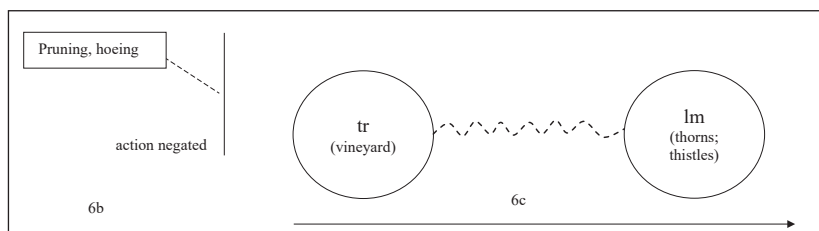


Figure 4 – Transformation resulting from absence of pruning and hoeing in Isa 5,6b and c

In 5b-c and 6a-c, the absence of what is essential for vineyard productivity — whether the removal of protection (hedge; wall) or the lack of cultivation (pruning; hoeing)¹⁸ — give way to a depiction of the results¹⁹: burning and trampling (5b-c), thorns and thistles (6c).

¹⁸ Absence continues in 6d with God commanding the clouds to withhold rain.

¹⁹ The squiggly line represents change.

Isaiah 7,23 also utilizes שמיר ושית within a context where the essentials for vineyard productivity have been removed²⁰. This is apparent through a comparison between 7,23 and 25.

23b every place where there would be 1000 vines worth 1000 pieces of silver	יהיה כל־מקום אשר יהיה־שם אלף גפן באלף כסף
c will become thorns and thistles.	לשמיר ולשית יהיה
...
25a all of the mountains which with a hoe would be hoed	וכל ההרים אשר במעדר יעדרון
b You will not go there for fear of thorn and thistle.	לא־תבוא שמה יראת שמיר ושית

Both 23b and 25a begin with כל+place. Most likely, כל־מקום and כל־ההרים are the same entities, as mountains (rather than valleys) are where vineyards grow, and the repeated use of שם in verses 23, 24, and 25 deictically draws attention to the same place. These places are followed by אשר clauses that *describe* a positive reality formerly associated with that place; where 1000 vines worth 1000 pieces of silver graced the landscape and where hoers were regularly at work. Both verses indicate a disruption between former associations with these places and the prospect of thorns and thistles. Figures 5 and 6 capture this (D = *descriptor*).

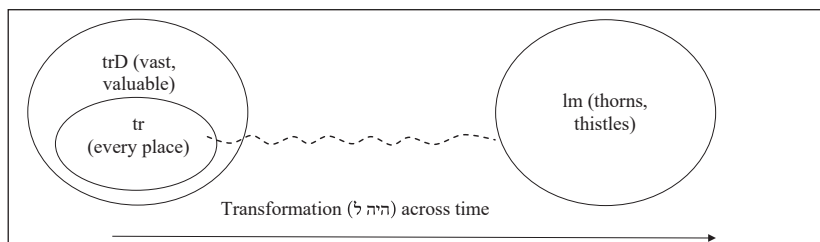


Figure 5 – The transformation of the trajector from a place of valuable vines into thorns and thistles in 7,23

²⁰ On the relationship between 5,1-7 and 7,18-25, see H.G.M. WILLIAMSON, “Poetic Vision in Isaiah 7,18-25”, *The Desert Will Bloom. Poetic Visions in Isaiah* (ed. A.J. EVERSON – H.C. KIM) (Atlanta, GA 2009) 77-89.

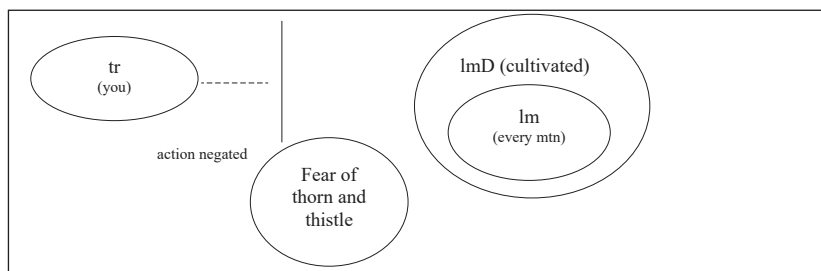


Figure 6 – The trajector does not undertake action to go to landmark previously viewed positively due to fear of thorns and thistles in 7,25.

In light of 7,23 and 25, שמיר ושית (7,23), including fearing them (7,25), are an antithesis to the positive associations of wealth and labor. שמיר ושית replace the vineyards in 7,23-25 to indicate a dreadful reversal from wealth and labor to unproductive, abandoned, dangerous reality.

Thus, in both 5,5-6 and 7,23 and 25, שמיר ושית captures the horrific outcome when essentials for vineyard production — whether protection or labor (עדר) — are disrupted and vineyards become vulnerable and no longer tended ²¹.

2. אמלל

Although one might isolate 16,8-9 and 24,7 from one another on tradition-historical grounds, the use of the verb אמלל (“to wither”) in both passages invites reflection. Depictions of vines withering occur in contexts concerned with the loss of the fruits of the vine, and this leads to mourning. In 16,7, a lament arises over the raisin cakes of Qir-Haresheth. An explanation of this lamenting unfolds in 16,8. ²²

8a For the terraces of Heshbon are withered, b the vine of Sibmah. c The lords of nations have struck ²² their choice vines, ...	כי שדמות חשבון אמלל גפן שבמה בעלי גוים הלמו שרוקיה ...
9a Therefore, I am weeping with the weeping of Jazer, for the vine of Sibmah...	על־כן אבכה בבכי יעזר גפן שבמה

²¹ See 32,10-12. קץ שמיר occurs in areas that were previously vineyards.

²² Some take “choice vines” as the subject of הלאם (cf. BLENKINSOPP, *Isaiah 1–39*, 295; WILDBERGER, *Isaiah 13–27*, 113). It is most natural to have “the lords” as the subject; so W.A.M. BEUKEN, *Jesaja 13–27* (Freiburg 2007) 123.

Verse 8a opens with a passive construction, where the trajector, “the terraces of Heshbon”, undergoes a change of state, “withered”. The parallel line that follows (8b), “vine of Sibmah”, uses the same passive verb through ellipsis. This second line (8b) both specifies that vines are the feature of the terraces in the first line that should come to mind and expands the purview of withering beyond Heshbon to another city well-known for its wine: Sibmah (see Fig. 7) ²³.

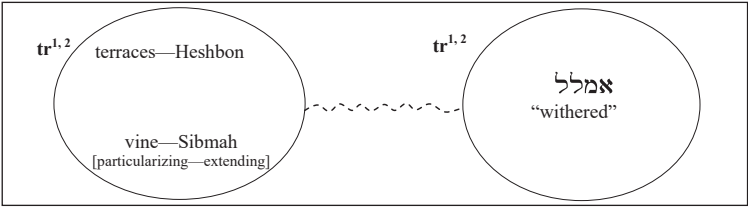


Figure 7 – Passive Transformation of Trajectors into Withered State in Isa 16,8a

The third line in verse 8 identifies the cause of the withering of the vine — the lords of the nations have struck the “choice vine” (שורק). By returning to the vine of Sibmah in verse 9, which was described in 8 as אמלל, the withered vine remains in view. Why describe the ruined vineyard as “withered”? An internal explanation emerges by understanding the כִּי in verse 8 as explanatory of verse 7. There will be weeping for raisin cakes (אשישים) because the vine is withered. In verse 10, the absence of joy is highlighted due to a lack of wine in the vats, with no hope for replenishment. The withering of vines receives focus when there is lament over the loss of the products of the vine.

In 24,7, there is the other depiction of the vine as אמלל. Verses 7-9 particularize God’s universal, eschatological judgment from vv. 1-6 within the context of a city ²⁴.

7a New wine is dried up ²⁵	אבל תירוש
b the vine withered.	אמללה-גפן
c All the merry-hearted groan.	נאנחו כל-שמח-לב:

²³ On the ability to particularize and develop thought in parallelism, see R. ALTER, *The Art of Biblical Poetry* (New York 1985) 66-84. The diagram is a slight modification of R.W. LANGACKER, *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar*, vol. 2 (Stanford, CA 1991) 202-203.

²⁴ WILDBERGER, *Isaiah 13–27*, 484-485.

²⁵ The LXX translates אבל with πένθειω (“to mourn”). It is most probable (with HALOT) to understand this as אבל II, “dry up”. So WILDBERGER, *Isaiah 13–27*, 478, 484.

The three lines in verse 7 relate closely. Line one (7a) begins by depicting how judgment has impacted the **תירוש** — seasonally fresh wine²⁶ — so that it is dried up. The drying up of the **תירוש** (tr^1) is not a reference to wine evaporating; instead, the second line clarifies that the new wine will dry up due to the fate of its source (tr^2): “the vine is withered”. The third line spells out the affective implications of the destruction of the vine: merriment (**שמח**; tr^3) has turned into groaning (**אנה**). This loss of joy continues through verse 11, as dances and singing often accompanying wine will cease. Figure 8 depicts the transformations of these three trajectors.

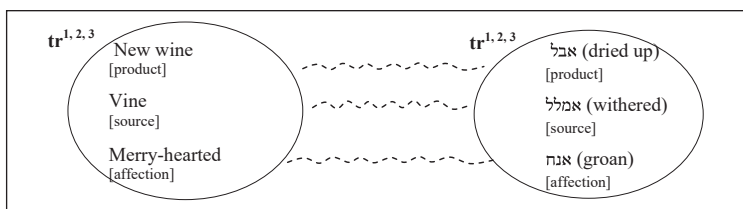


Figure 8 – Transformation of Trajectors through Passive and Intransitive Constructions in Isa 24,7

Again, as in Isa 16,8, the image of a vine withering in 24,7 occurs within a passage focusing on the loss of the vine’s fruits and its accompanying mourning, as is reiterated through verses 7-11²⁷.

Thus, Cognitive Linguistics invites reflection upon how verbal expressions of a given motif figures into conceptual relations across an utterance. In the motif of the ruined vineyard, **שׁמיר** and **שׁית** coordinate with expressions that desire to capture the dreadful outcome of the absence of what is needed for the successful production in vineyards — particularly protection and labor (5,5-6; 7,23-25; cf. 32,10.12-13). When the speaker wants to capture the sad absence of the fruits of the vine, the notion of the withering (**אמלל**) vine comes into view (16,7-9; 24,7).

II. THE RUINED VINEYARD AND SEMANTIC DOMAINS

Although the ruined vineyard motif finds unique expression within the aims of each passage, a common matrix of domains informs it²⁸. “A

²⁶ WALSH, *The Fruit of the Vine*, 194-197.

²⁷ ROBERTS, *First Isaiah*, 314.

²⁸ On domains, see TAYLOR, *Cognitive Grammar*, 439-458.

domain may be defined as any knowledge configuration that is relevant to the characterization of meaning”²⁹. For the concept [VINE], as with most concepts, many domains come together in its conceptualization. Three of the most prominent domains are sketched below (Fig. 9).

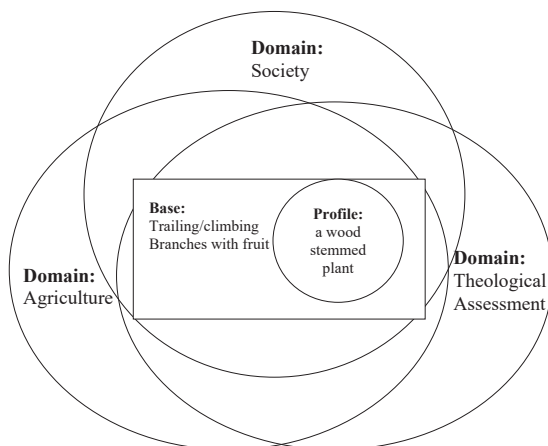


Figure 9 – Profile, Base, and Matrix of Prominent Domains for the Concept [VINE]³⁰

Domain One: Agriculture

As is common in the Mediterranean, vineyards are significant within Israel’s agricultural economy. This is apparent in our passages in several ways. For one, viticulture takes place in the hill country, with its rocky *terra rosa* soil³¹. The vine keeper in 5,1 chooses a hill for his vineyard³², כל־ההרים parallels כל־המקום, and the vines in Moab’s terraces (שדמות) are in view in 16,8. Additionally, a ruined vineyard entails the undoing of years, even generations of labor³³. In 5,2, the labors of the vineyard owner are stressed: selecting a plot, soil broken up (עֲזָק) and de-stoned, choice seed planted, a tower built, and a winepress hewn. Not only are preparations and construction important, but it takes up to ten years of tending until a vineyard produces a full harvest. Ruined vines strike at the bond forged between people and their land over years of labor.

²⁹ TAYLOR, *Cognitive Grammar*, 439.

³⁰ For a similar diagram, see VAN WOLDE, *Reframing Biblical Studies*, 58.

³¹ On Israel’s ideal conditions for viticulture, see WALSH, *The Fruit of the Vine*, 27–41.

³² קֶרֶן refers to a mountain only in Isa 5,1 (cf. HALOT, 2, 1145).

³³ For more on viticulture, see MATTHEWS, “Treading the Winepress”, 19–32; WALSH, *The Fruit of the Vine*.

As contexts of work, the prospect of no longer hoeing (עדר; 5,6; 7,25), resulting in thorns and thistles, indicates a major rupture between the land and its caregivers. Labor also involves harvesting (32,10) and treading (16,10; cf. 63,1-6)³⁴, where the supply would be replenished (24,7-9); the absence of such labors indicates the undoing of the agricultural economy so central to Israel. Third, scholars estimate that families would have 1–2 liters of wine per day in ancient Israel³⁵. The ruin of a product so central to daily life was no small loss. Thus, although certain passages gravitate to particular facets of agriculture, the concept of a ruined vineyard certainly entails a major blow to the hill country region, reaching those who labored over such vineyards and even impacting what was available at mealtime.

Domain Two: Society

Although intertwined with agriculture, the vine interrelates with the domain of society in several respects. First, family structure and social class must come into view. On the one hand, vines held families together. Vineyards were an inheritance that linked one generation to the next. When Naboth refuses to give King Ahab his vineyard, it is because it was “the inheritance of my ancestors” (1 Kgs 21,3; cf. vs. 4). Although it is difficult to quantify, numerous families owned and worked their vineyards at the time of the prophet; the Samarian Ostraca reveal tax records from the vineyards of poor families during the eighth century³⁶. Entire families participated in the viticulture process³⁷, including women. Indeed, as C. Meyers observes, women would carry a greater level of responsibility for the fields and vineyards during times of war³⁸, so those women lamenting

³⁴ S. DAR, *Landscape and Pattern*. An Archaeological Survey of Samaria 800 B.C.E.—636 C.E. (Oxford 1986) 147-164, identifies 300 wine-presses in western Samaria, some built for individual farmers and others for entire villages. MATTHEWS, “Treading the Winepress”, 2, notes that 117 winepresses are found in the vicinity of Megiddo.

³⁵ WALSH, *The Fruit of the Vine*, 211, estimates 1.9 liters per day from a 2 dunam vineyard. DAR, *Landscape and Pattern*, 160-161, calculates 1 liter per person per day for a 1.5-3 dunam vineyard.

³⁶ See A.F. RAINEY, *The Sacred Bridge* (Jerusalem, 2014) 221-222. The Gezer calendar and the design of the four-room house further support the family locus for viticulture (WALSH, *The Fruit of the Vine*, 46-59). This tempers M.L. Chaney’s portrayal of life in Israel during the Assyrian era as if only the royal and military elite owned vineyards: M.L. CHANEY, “Whose Sour Grapes?: The Addressees of Isaiah 5,1-7 in Light of Political Economy”, *Semeia* 87 (1999) 105-122.

³⁷ Family involvement in modern Iran may be a parallel; see WALSH, *The Fruit of the Vine*, 59-63.

³⁸ C. MEYERS, “Procreation, Production, and Protection: Male-Female Balance in Early Israel”, *JAAR* 51.4 (1983) 569-593, esp. 574-575, 578. See also C. MEYERS, “The Family

over the failing harvest in Isa 32,10–12 would be lamenting over vines they had tended.

On the other hand, although there was some degree of family possession of vineyards, the wealthy elite and their luxurious vineyards are often in view within Isaiah ³⁹. The parable of the vineyard in Isaiah 5 is followed by accusations against those who are acquiring house after house and field after field (5,8–10). The warnings that their vineyards will not produce much and that their intoxication will catch up to them suggest that God is standing against powerful vineyard owners who have abused the poor in the process (5,10, 11, 22; cf. 3,14). As for 7,23, if the typical vineyard had 275 vines ⁴⁰, the ruin of a place with 1000 vines worth 1000 pieces of silver is an indictment against the (royal?) elite. Thus, the ruin of a vineyard is the loss of something central to a family system and/or a strike of judgment against the elite and their impressive vineyards.

Second, social occasions of celebration closely intertwine with the vine and its production. Whether during the process of harvesting (Jdg 9,27) or consumption (Ps 4,8[7]), joy accompanies the vine. For this reason, sorrow and lament accompanies the absence of wine. In Joel 1,12, we read: “The vine is dried up (יבש) ... Surely joy has withered away (יבש) from the children of humanity”. In Isa 16,7–10, 24,7–9, and 32,12–13, there are explicit correlations between the ruined vineyard and the loss of joy. In 16,7–11, Moab “howls” (ילל) and “groans” (הגה) and the prophet weeps (בכה) and sheds tears (דמעה) over ruined vineyards; גיל, שמחה, and רנן now are absent from their orchards and vineyards. In Isa 24,7–8, the joyful (שמחי לב) will mourn and their joyous (משוש) instruments will cease due to the shriveling of the vine ⁴¹. In 32,12–13, lament will occur since the fruitful vines are now thorns and thistles. Thus, as a symbol for and cause of joy within society, vines bond communities together in celebration; their ruin signals the end of an era of joy for that community.

Third, a pre-requisite for viticultural success is social stability and tranquility ⁴². For this reason, texts portray an ideal, peaceful future by speaking of vines (1 Kgs. 5,5 [4,25]; Mic. 4,4; Zech. 3,10; 8,12). In contrast, war is a great threat to social stability, and this is seen in the fate of vines

in Early Israel”, *Families in Ancient Israel* (eds. L.G. PERDUE et al.) (Louisville, KY 1997) 1–47, esp. 24–27; R. W. POE HAYS, “Sing Me a Parable of Zion: Isaiah’s Vineyard (5,1–7) and Its Relation to the ‘Daughter Zion’ Tradition”, *JBL* 135 (2016) 750–751.

³⁹ See CHANEY, “Whose Sour Grapes”.

⁴⁰ WALSH, *The Fruit of the Vine*, 211.

⁴¹ ROBERTS, *First Isaiah*, 314.

⁴² L.E. STAGER, “The Firstfruits of Civilization”, *Palestine in the Bronze and Iron Ages. Papers in Honour of Olga Tufnell* (London 1985) 172–188, esp. 177; WALSH, *The Fruit of the Vine*, 116–118.

as forces invade (cf. Jer 5,17; Joel 1,7). There are references to the destruction of vines in warfare across the ancient Near East over the centuries. From Egypt, Pepi I (2300s BCE) states: "After it had thrown down its enclosures, the army returned in safety; after it had cut down its figs and its vines" ⁴³. In a text from Ugarit, a commander reports: "BN HRNK has come (here), he has defeated the (local) troops, he has pillaged the town, he has even burned our grain on the threshing-floors and destroyed the vineyards" ⁴⁴. From Assyria, Sargon (724-705 BCE) describes a campaign against the Mannaeans, saying, "I cut down its splendid orchards, I cut down great quantities of its vines, I made an end of its drinking" ⁴⁵.

The ruined vineyard motif in Isaiah 1–39 evokes a context of military invasion. Invasions by Egypt and Assyria (7,18.20) serve as the backdrop to 7,23-25. In 16,8, it is the "lords of the nations" who will strike Moab's vines. The opening verses of chapter 24 utilize language similar to Nah 2,1-2.9-10 to portray YHWH as a warrior who will lay waste to (בִּקֵּק), devastate (בִּלַּק), and plunder (בָּזַז) the earth (אֶרֶץ) and scatter (פָּרַץ) its inhabitants. Presumably, YHWH's actions as a warrior at the start of chapter 24 are the cause of the withering of the vine in 24,7-8. In 32,12-13, an ancient hearer would know that land, fields, vines, houses, towns, towers, and watch stations (32,10-14) come to ruin through invasion ⁴⁶. The realities of vineyard destruction amidst warfare are what make the metaphorical trampling of Israel and Judah in 5,5-6 so devastating. The ruined vineyard signifies a context of social and political upheaval.

Thus, the ruined vineyard motif in Isaiah 1–39 has the capacity to signify devastating ruptures within family, judgment against the elite, the absence of joy, and upheaval amidst conquest by invading nations.

Domain Three: Theological Assessment

The vine can also be a thermometer for where a nation stands in relationship to God. The flourishing of a vineyard can be a sign of God's blessing of restoration, as is captured in Deuteronomy (cf. Deut 6,11; Josh 24,13)

⁴³ WALSH, *The Fruit of the Vine*, 125. Later, Thutmose III (1490-1436 BCE) speaks of destroying Ardate's grain, cutting down its trees, and consuming its wine (*ANET*, 239).

⁴⁴ D. PARDEE, "Emergency Report from a City-Commander (RS 19.001)", in *COS* 3.45ff.

⁴⁵ *ARAB* 2,90, paragraph 164. See also *ARAB* 2,87-88, paragraph 160. For references to destroyed horticulture (presumably including vineyards), see, for Tiglath-Pileser III, *ARAB* 1,279, paragraph 776; *ARAB* 1,285, paragraph 792; for Shalmanesser III, *ARAB* 1,221, paragraph 608; for Sennacherib, *The Annals of Sennacherib*, 59, paragraph 29. See also J.D. SMOAK, "Building Houses and Planting Vineyards: The Early Inner-Biblical Discourse on an Ancient Israelite Wartime Curse", *JBL* 127 (2008) 20-24.

⁴⁶ BLENKINSOPP, *Isaiah 1–39*, 434.

and the prophets (cf. Hag 2,19; Zech 8,12; Mal 3,10–11)⁴⁷. As a corollary, the vine's destruction indicates God's judgment. For instance, in Hosea 2, God will take action against adulterous Israel by "laying waste her vines (גפן) and fig trees" (2,14[12]; cf. Jer 5,17; Joel 1,7, 12).

In Isaiah 1–39, although foreign nations are destroying the vineyards, these military tactics are interpreted as God's act of judgment against his people. In Isa 5,5–6, God uses the first person several times,**אֹדִיעָהּ** **אֲשֶׁר-אֲנִי עָשָׂה**....**וְאִשִּׁיתָהּ**, as he is responsible for the walls being broken down and the vineyard being trampled into a wasteland. In 7,18–25, God summons Egypt and Assyria to wreak havoc on his people (7,18,20), so the destruction of the vines of the wealthy whose vineyards consisted of one-thousand vines in 7,23 is God's act of judgment against his people, a point further emphasized by the editorial placement of 7,1–17 and 7,18–25 besides one another⁴⁸. Chapter 16 portrays God as responsible for Moab's downfall (16,6; cf. first person for God in 15,9; 16,10), and, if T. Fretheim is correct that "[t]o hear and see the prophet was to hear and see God", then the prophet's mourning (16,9) represents God's own sorrow as he issues judgment⁴⁹. In chapter 24, worldwide destruction, which includes the withering of the vine, is the judgment of God upon the inhabitants of the earth for transgressing his laws and statutes, for violating the eternal covenant (24,5). Finally, in Isa 32,12–13, it is unclear whether the loss of the fruitful vine is the outworking of God's judgment, the terrible collateral damage of war on these women, or likely both. Thus, in the worldview of ancient Israel, the status of vines can be an indication of God's blessing or judgment.

In summary, as one looks back over how these three domains inform the ruined vineyard motif, several insights emerge. First, two features within the domains occur in all five passages. The ruined vineyard is always understood as a sign of divine judgment, whether against Israel (5,5–6; 7,23–25; 32,10–12), Moab (16,8–10), or the people of an unspecified eschatological city (24,7). Additionally, the ruined vineyard is always connected to military invasion. Second, certain passages emphasize aspects of a given domain more than others. In terms of agriculture, different verses highlight locale within hilly terrain (5,1; 7,23–25; 18,6), impact on working the ground (5,6; 7,25), and production (16,10 [treading]; 32,10 [harvest]). In terms of social impact, the destruction of vines as a condemnation of the elite is apparent in 7,23 (cf. 32,10–12), and the absence of joy due to the ruin of the vineyards is referred to in 16,8–9; 24,7; 32,12–13. Thus,

⁴⁷ See also SMOAK, "Building Houses and Planting Vineyards", 19–35.

⁴⁸ BEUKEN, *Jesaja 1–12* (Freiburg 2003) 188–189.

⁴⁹ T. FRETHEIM, *The Suffering of God. An Old Testament Perspective* (Philadelphia, PA 1984) 149.

divine judgment and social upheaval figure prominently in the conceptualization of the ruined vineyard motif within Isaiah 1–39, while a given passage may emphasize different aspects of the impact of such ruin upon agriculture and society.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The aim of this essay has been to offer a stronger conceptual foundation for understanding the ruined vine motif in Isaiah 1–39 with the help of Cognitive Linguistics. An examination of *relations* within each utterance exposes a tendency to use particular phraseology when attempting to depict either the aftermath of the removal of what is essential for vineyard flourishing (שִׁית and שְׁמִיר) or the loss of the fruits of the vine (אֶמְלֵל). The semantic domains of agriculture, society, and theological assessment locate the ruin of vineyards within the conceptual outlook of ancient Israel. Viticulture is central within the agricultural economy throughout the Levant, so the destruction of vines captures a significant economic rupture. Additionally, from a social perspective, military invasion is a serious threat to the well-being of vines, so their depletion captures the disruption caused by military invasion, which all five passages imply. Furthermore, vine destruction signifies a loss of joy throughout society, resulting in an era of mourning (16,8-9; 24,7-13; 32,9-14). What is more, the status of the vine is a gauge of YHWH's standing towards his people, as its destruction is often a sign of judgment explicitly noted in all of the passages except for 32,12. Thus, the centrality of the vine within the fabric of society and its correspondence with peace and joy make the vine's destruction amidst war a powerful symbol in Isaiah 1–39 for expressing the weighty reality of divine, violent judgment.

Although the aim of this essay has not been to address how the motif contributes to the book's unity, this study will draw to a close with several suggestive reflections. For one, these texts may contribute to the cohesion between the sub-sections (1–12; 13–23; 24–27; 28–33) within First Isaiah. Isa 7,23 addresses Israel and Judah, while 16,8-9 extends the threat of vine destruction to Moab, with 24,7 universalizing this tragic destiny to all the inhabitants of the earth. Isa 32,12 returns back to Judah, as it foretells a time when a city's vines will no longer bear fruit. The confrontation of audiences in differing locales (whether Judah and Israel, Moab, or the entire world) and time frames (whether pre-exile, exile, or post-exile) with the same fate of vine destruction contributes to the goal behind the shaping of Isaiah 1–39 to enable the messages of judgment to be read and

appropriated as warnings for subsequent audiences⁵⁰. Second, the metaphorical depiction of Israel and Judah as God's putrid vineyard (כרם) in 5,1-7 likely interrelates with the more literal expectation of God's plans to judge Israel, Judah, Moab, and the entire world by destroying their vines⁵¹. Third, the study above tells only one side of the story. The destruction of the vine is not the book of Isaiah's final word about the vine. From a more literal perspective, there are hopes that God's people will again enjoy the fruit of their vineyards after God saves Zion (37,30; cf. 65,21). Indeed, just after news of worldwide vine depletion in chapter 24, there is hope that all peoples will drink from the dregs of wine (שומר I) at a celebratory feast hosted by YHWH (25,6-8)⁵². From a more metaphorical perspective, although God removes protection from his vineyard and allows it to be trampled in 5,5-6, 27,2-6 looks forward to a time when YHWH will again have a fruitful vineyard, as he protects it, waters it, and even declares that he will go to war against any thorns and thistles (שמיר שית; cf. 5,6; 7,23) that may arise⁵³. God's people, his vineyard, will again experience divine favor, social stability, peace, and joy as they take root and spread across the entire world⁵⁴. Thus, just as the centrality of the vine within the fabric of society and its correspondence with peace and joy make the vine's destruction amidst war a powerful symbol in Isaiah 1–39 for expressing the weighty reality of divine, violent judgment, so the renewal of the vine (literally and metaphorically) aptly symbolizes the new era of salvation.

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⁵⁰ See A.T. ABERNETHY, *Eating in Isaiah*. Approaching the Role of Food and Drink in Isaiah's Structure and Message (BIS 131; Leiden 2014) 65-67, who begins to consider how ruined vines in 1–12, 13–23, 24–27, and 28–35 promote cohesion across these units.

⁵¹ On the connection between 5,1-7 and 7,23, see WILLIAMSON, "Poetic Vision in Isaiah 7,18-25", 79-81.

⁵² For the view that 25,6-8 is capable of conveying a banquet both of judgment and salvation for both Israel and the nations in accord with the wider book of Isaiah, see M.P. MAIER, "Festbankett oder Henkersmahl? Die zwei Gesichter von Jes 25:6-8", VT 64 (2014) 445-464.

⁵³ L. Alonso-Schökel, "La canción de la viña: Is 27,2-5", *EsEcl* 34 (1960) 767-774, identifies affinities between Isa 5,1-7 and 27,2-6, suggesting that they are both "songs to the divine" (*canciones a lo divino*, 773) that are adapted from secular songs and spiritualized for religious purposes.

⁵⁴ On the relationship between 5,1-7 and 27,2-6 when read sequentially across the book, see B.J.M. JOHNSON, "'Whoever Gives Me Thorns and Thistles': Rhetorical Ambiguity and the Use of מן יתן in Isaiah 27.2-6", *JSOT* 36 (2011) 105-126. See also E. JACOB, "Du premier au deuxième chant de la vigne du prophète Esaïe: Réflexions sur Esaïe 27,2-5", *Wort — Gebot — Glaube*. Beiträge zur Theologie des Alten Testaments. FS. W. Eichrodt (eds. H.-J. STOEBE et al.) (Zürich 1970) 325-330, who not only examines 27,2-5 as a reversal of 5,1-7 but also attempts to explain how this figures into the apocalyptic outlook of Isaia 24–27, which looks beyond unspecified contexts of conflict.

SUMMARY

This article utilizes Cognitive Linguistics to present a stronger conceptual understanding of the motif of the ruined vineyard in Isaiah 1–39. First, a relations approach to utterances illuminates the function of particular terms used to describe the ruined vineyard (שִׁית and שְׁמִיר; אִמְלֵל). Second, a domains approach to the ruined vineyard demonstrates how agriculture, society, and theological assessment inform this motif. The centrality of the vine within the fabric of society and its correspondence with peace and joy make the vine's destruction amidst war a powerful symbol in Isaiah 1–39 for capturing the weighty reality of divine, violent judgment.

PROPHETS IN JEREMIAH IN STRUGGLE OVER LEADERSHIP, OR RATHER OVER PROPHETIC AUTHORITY?

I. INTRODUCTION

This article began as a short paper given at the EABS section “Concepts of Leadership in the Hebrew Bible”¹. I found the session title of the Berlin 2017 meeting, “Prophets and Leadership” (not “leaders”), intriguing because it could be read to invite at least two different types of discussion. One could involve the social context(s) in which prophets *observe* leadership and act alongside leaders, sometimes in support of and often in criticism of the kings. Because prophets themselves are not considered leaders, their theological perspectives on political leadership might be of interest. The second type of discussion could focus on prophetic personae or even presumed circles of prophets who are portrayed in *struggle among themselves* over leadership. This second type requires a much broader perspective on leadership that includes intellectual leadership and studies that presume an intellectual elite of Judah². This article contributes to the second type of discussion.

Verses 9–40 in chapter 23 and chapters 27–29 in the Book of Jeremiah are among the passages that testify to rich prophetic activity by the late seventh and early sixth centuries BCE, evident in the fierce struggles against what Jeremiah (the prophet, and his followers/tradents) would designate “illegitimate prophets and prophecy” in Jerusalem and in Babylon (Jer 29,15–32). It should immediately be stated that the Book of Jeremiah offers only a partial picture of these other prophetic activities. Ten fragmentary peace prophecies are quoted in the book, and they extend from one word to several verses. These prophecies all promise salvation in the face of the political-military crises that marked the deteriorating state of Judah between 604 and

¹ I am grateful to Katharina Pyschny (University of Lausanne) and to Sarah Schulz (University of Erlangen) for the invitation and for their scholarly leadership.

² The idea that prophets (as historical figures) were an intellectual and religious leadership or members of intellectual elite circles has been much discussed; see J. BLENKINSOPP, *A History of Prophecy in Israel* (Louisville, KY 1996) 30–39, esp. 38–39. Perspectives on the social status of prophets draw upon M. WEBER, “The Prophet”, reprinted in D.L. PETERSEN, ed., *Prophecy in Israel. Search for an Identity* (Philadelphia, PA – London 1987) 99–111 (German original 1922), who designated prophets as leaders and “bearer(s) of charisma,” as well as “renewer(s)/founder(s) of religion.” See also the appreciation and criticism of BLENKINSOPP, *History*, 34–35.

586, along three specific themes³. First, the prophets assure the people, and presumably the king, that the Babylonian threat against Jerusalem and Judah will never materialize (Jer 14,13.15; 23,16-17; 37,19). This message may be summarized in one word: שלום “peace, well-being” (Jer 6,14 // 8,11, with minor textual differences; 23,17; Ezek 13,10)⁴. Second, the prophets promise divine deliverance from the ongoing subjugation to Babylon (Jer 27,9.14; 28,2-4.10-11). Third, they promise that king Jehoiachin, the temple vessels, and the people exiled in 597 will all soon return to Jerusalem (Jer 28,2-4; 27,16-22 MT). While most of these fragmentary prophecies are anonymous, their unified messages of peace have led scholars to assume that the prophets who uttered them were a cohesive group⁵.

The struggle between true and false prophets has been addressed by scholars from the perspectives of form, content, and social context, emphasizing the unsatisfactory criteria for distinguishing between them (by the prophets themselves, or by their audiences)⁶. The promises of salvation

³ “Peace prophecies” in Jeremiah occur in Jer 6,14; 8,11; 14,13.15; 23,17; 27,9.14.16-22; 28,2-4; 37,19 (and Ezek 13,10). A few additional quotations fall outside this group: Jer 23,25 refers to dreams as a basis for prophecy; Jer 23,33-40 features a quasi-dialogue about מִשַׁע יְהוָה. The quotation in Jer 7,4.8 of דְּבַר־הַשֶּׁקֶר “false words” or “illusions” (NJPS) that the people count upon is not attributed to a prophetic speaker, although the Targum and the Syriac regularly present them as such; see, e.g., Jer 23,16 and constantly in 28,1.5.10.12.13 (a plus in the Syriac).15.17.

⁴ The promise of “peace, well-being” is attested in Neo-Assyrian prophecies; see *šulmu*, CAD Š/III, 247-56; S. PARPOLA, *Assyrian Prophecies* (SAA 9; Helsinki 1997) 1.9, lines 26, 29; 3.1, lines 9-12.

⁵ The portrayal of those peace/false prophets as a single group is taken by scholars as self-evident. I wonder if this is a valid assumption. Are the peace prophets similar to the so-called cult prophets? And is it correct to assume that those prophets mentioned as a group side by side with priests are indeed cult prophets? See הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַנְבִּיאִים, often in Jer 2,26; 4,9; 5,31; 6,13; 8,10; 13,13; 14,18; 23,11.33.34; 26,11.16 and otherwise in Isa 28,7; Mic 3,11; Zeph 3,4; Zech 7,3; Lam 2,20; 4,13; see also the following note. G. VON RAD, “Die falschen Propheten”, ZAW 51 (1933) 109-120, esp. 114-115, explained the cultic function of prophets as focused in their assumed role as intercessors, praying for the people in the frame of the official national cult. See further M. LEUCHTER, *The Polemics of Exile in Jeremiah 26-45* (New York 2008) 40-49, esp. 44-47.

⁶ T.W. OVERHOLT, “Jeremiah 27-29: The Question of False Prophecy”, *JAAR* 35 (1967) 241-249; OVERHOLT, *The Threat of Falsehood. A Study in the Theology of the Book of Jeremiah* (SBT, Second Series 16; London 1970) 24-48; J.A. SANDERS, “Hermeneutics in True and False Prophecy”, *Canon and Authority. Essays in Old Testament Religion and Theology* (eds. G.W. COATS – B.O. LONG) (Philadelphia, PA 1977) 21-41; B.O. LONG, “Prophetic Authority as Social Reality”, *Canon and Authority. Essays in Old Testament Religion and Theology* (eds. G.W. COATS – B.O. LONG) (Philadelphia, PA 1977) 3-20; F.E. DEIST, “The Prophets: Are We Heading for a Paradigm Switch?” *Prophet und Prophetenbuch. Festschrift für Otto Kaiser zum 65. Geburtstag* (eds. V. FRITZ – K.F. POHLMANN – H.CH. SCHMITT) (Berlin 1989) 1-18; R.J. COGGINS, “Prophecy—True and False”, *Of Prophets' Visions and the Wisdom of Sages. Essays in Honour of R. Norman Whybray* (eds. H.A. MCKAY – D.J.A. CLINES) (JSOTSup 162; Sheffield 1993) 80-94; and R.R. WILSON,

from the Babylonian threat and especially the assumed reliance on the prophecies of Isaiah son of Amoz have led scholars to propose that the core of controversy among the prophets of the early sixth century was over Zion theology⁷. The presumed line from Isaiah son of Amoz to Hananiah son of Azzur understands the latter as an advocate of Zion theology and presented Jeremiah as an opponent of this theology⁸. I find this proposal problematic because Jerusalem does not seem to be the primary focus of these prophecies⁹. The common denominator that connects all of these prophecies seems to be more comprehensive and follows their theological point of departure, namely, that the peace prophets could do nothing other than expect divine assistance at this time of need¹⁰.

Alternatively, scholars have tended to suggest that all prophets participated in, or even ideologically enforced, the two assumed political parties in Jerusalem. The party that advocated rebellion against Babylon and embraced Egyptian political-military aid (Jer 37,7) appears to have gained theological support from the peace prophets, while the party that called the king to surrender and accept the Babylonian regime (often called the pro-Babylon party) included the Shaphanite family of scribes

“Interpreting Israel’s Religion: An Anthropological Perspective on the Problem of False Prophecy”, *“The Place Is Too Small for Us”*. The Israelite Prophets in Recent Scholarship (ed. R.P. GORDON) (Sources for Biblical and Theological Study 5; Winona Lake, IN 1995) 332-344. For an examination of this controversy that takes into account literary-historical dimensions of the growth of the Book of Jeremiah, and thus profound Deuteronomistic involvement in chapters 27-29, see E.W. NICHOLSON, *Preaching to the Exiles*. A Study of the Prose Tradition in the Book of Jeremiah (Oxford 1970) 93-103, esp. 95, 96-97, 100, 103, 126-127; and C.J. SHARP, *Prophecy and Ideology in Jeremiah*. Struggles for Authority in the Deutero-Jeremianic Prose (London 2003) 103-124, who argued for a contesting perspective within Deutero-Jeremianic editorial traditions.

⁷ So M. BUBER, *The Prophetic Faith* (trans. C. WITTON-DAVIES; New York 1949) 168-170, and J.P. SISSON, “Jeremiah and the Jerusalem Conception of Peace”, *JBL* 105 (1986) 429-442. See also W. EICHRODT, *Ezekiel* (trans. C. QUIN; OTL; Philadelphia, PA 1970) 167-168. In reference to Jer 23,16-22, W. MCKANE, *Jeremiah I–XXV* (ICC; Edinburgh 1986) 579, argued for a mixture of conceptions behind the peace prophecies of patriotism, nationalism, and Yahwism that brought the so-called Jerusalem theology of Zion and the Davidic covenant together as everlasting promises.

⁸ For a discussion of Zion theology in Jeremiah, see D. ROM-SHILONI, “Challenging the Notion of ‘Spiritual Metamorphosis’: Conceptions of Divine Presence and Anthropomorphic Language in Jeremiah”, *HeBAI* (2018) [forthcoming].

⁹ Jerusalem is mentioned only in two of the peace prophecies (Jer 14,14; Ezek 13,16). Other peace prophecies either refer to the entire area of Judah (Jer 14,15; 37,19) or lack any spatial reference whatsoever (Jer 14,13; 23,17).

¹⁰ I concur on this point with G. QUELL, *Wahre und falsche Propheten* (Gütersloh 1952) 58-61; E. OSSWALD, *Falsche Prophetie in Alten Testament* (Tübingen 1962) 18-23; and OVERHOLT, “Jeremiah 27–29”, 245-246.

and the prophet Jeremiah (Jeremiah 27) ¹¹. But was it fundamentally a political affiliation that divided prophets?

I argue in this article that the major issue in the polemic among these prophets was indeed theological, a dispute over different concepts of war, particularly the roles of God and humans in war, and especially God's role in the war against Jerusalem and Judah ¹². To substantiate this argument, I want to focus on two aspects of the conflict between Jeremiah and Hananiah (Jeremiah 27–28). First, in order to understand what they are struggling over, I will look at the theological issue that stands at the core of their differing explanations of political events. I will then look at how status and authority factor into their polemics (28,5-9.15-17; as well as 27,9.14 and 23,9-40), particularly at how questioning sources of prophetic authority is really questioning the intellectual leadership of the prophets.

Before I begin, I would like to make a short note on the methodology I use in this paper. My main interest in the Book of Jeremiah, as in other sixth-century compositions, concerns the diverse theological conceptions of God we find in biblical literature of that era and the interrelationships among them. Therefore, without neglecting literary-historical and redaction-critical dimensions in the study of this book, I have been making room for rhetorical criticism, and thus for the possibility that the different perceptions and at times straightforward polemics we find in the Book of Jeremiah may be synchronic. To my mind, both diachronic and synchronic dimensions are necessary in studying the Book of Jeremiah, and particularly in addressing issues that touch on prophetic activity and how it is presented within the book ¹³.

¹¹ OVERHOLT, *Threat*, 29-45, esp. 30-33; and already S. YEIVIN, "Families and Parties in the Kingdom of Judah", *Tarbiz* 12 (1951) 241-267 (Hebrew). SHARP, *Prophecy and Ideology*, 115, 119-123, emphasized the political sphere behind the peace prophecies and their reshaping by the pro-*golah* circles versus the Judah-based circles of Deutero-Jeremianic traditionalists.

¹² VON RAD, "Die falschen Propheten", 111-112, 116, focused on conceptions of war and actually on real politics, thus his close connection of prophecy and history based on the theology of Deuteronomy and particularly on the war law in Deut 20,1-4. Yet he argued for the alternative of either a promise of salvation or a holy war: "Sie rufen shalom, d. h. Verkündigen Hell, solange es ihnen gut geht; andernfalls predigen sie den heiligen Krieg" (111). The current study observes the theological contention differently. Other suggestions regarding the core in the debate between Jeremiah and Hananiah include the ones made by Overholt, who suggested the duration of the exile of 597 BCE as part of Judah's subjugation under Babylonian suzerainty based on Jer 28,2-4.11 and 29,28 in OVERHOLT, "Jeremiah 27–29," 242, 246-47, and "the clash of two differing interpretations of the nature of Yahweh's action within Judah's present history" in OVERHOLT, "Jeremiah 27–29," 245.

¹³ For more on these methodological considerations, see D. ROM-SHILONI, "Spiritual Metamorphosis", esp. 1-8 [forthcoming].

II. WHAT DO THEY STRUGGLE OVER?

CONCEPTIONS OF DIVINE AND HUMAN ROLES IN WAR: VICTORY AND DEFEAT

Jeremiah 27 and 28 offer contrasting prophecies about the relationship between King Zedekiah of Judah and the Babylonian king (Jer 27,1-8 versus 28,1-4,10-11, and again vv. 12-14)¹⁴. The prophecy starts with a symbolic action that Jeremiah is instructed to perform and an exhortation to Zedekiah and the regional messengers convening in Jerusalem (Jer 27,1-8). When Hananiah son of Azzur approaches Jeremiah in front of the priests and the entire people, this symbolic action and its message becomes a public debate in the House of YHWH (Jer 28,1). Hananiah's prophecy introduces the longest of the peace prophecies quoted (Jer 28,1-4):

1 ... the prophet Hananiah son of Azzur, who was from Gibeon, spoke to me in the House of YHWH, in the presence of the priests and all the people. He said:
 2 "Thus said YHWH of Hosts, the God of Israel: I hereby break the yoke of the king of Babylon.
 3 In two years,
I will restore to this place all the vessels of the House of YHWH which King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon took from this place and brought to Babylon. 4 And King Jeconiah son of Jehoiakim of Judah, and all the Judean exiles who went to Babylon
I will restore to this place—declares YHWH.
Yes, I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon."

... אמר אלי חנניה בן עזור הנביא אשר מגבעון בבית יהוה לעיני הכהנים וכל העם לאמר כה אמר יהוה צבאות אלהי ישראל לאמר שברתי את על מלך בבל. בעוד שנתים ימים אני משיב אל המקום הזה את כל כלי בית יהוה אשר לקח נבוכדנאצר מלך בבל מן המקום הזה ויביאם בבל. ואת יכניה בן יהויקים מלך יהודה ואת כל גלות יהודה הבאים בבלה אני משיב אל המקום הזה נאם יהוה כי אשבר את על מלך בבל.

Hananiah's listeners could easily recognize stylistic and thematic markers in this prophecy, which were typical devices of the prophetic proclamations of his colleague, the prophet Jeremiah. The prescript, *כה אמר יהוה* (Jer 28,2), uses one of the very common introductory formulae in the Book of Jeremiah (Jer 7,3,21; 9,14 po; 16,9; 18,15; 24,27; 29,4,9,21,25; 31,23). The main body of the prophecy consists of one *inclusio* that frames a repeated promise of deliverance: *שברתי את-על מלך*

¹⁴ Jeremiah 27 and 28 have attracted much scholarly attention. Among the many studies, see N.M. SARNA, "The Abortive Insurrection in Zedekiah's Day (Jer. 27–29)", *Eretz Israel* 14 (1978) *79–*96; OVERHOLT, "Jeremiah 27–29," 241–249; T.W. OVERHOLT, "King Nebuchadnezzar in the Jeremiah Tradition," *CBQ* 30 (1968) 39–48; OVERHOLT, *Threat*, 24–48; G. BRIN, *A Prophet in His Struggle*. Studies in Four Biographical Narratives in the Prophetic Literature (Tel Aviv 1983) 83–104 (Hebrew); and LEUCHTER, *Polemics*, 40–49.

בבל (v. 2b) and **כי אשבר את־על מלך בבל** (v. 4b) and a further *inclusio* that frames the repeated promise to return the temple vessels, the king and the people **אני משיב אל המקום הזה** (vv. 3 and 4). Moreover, Hananiah also knows the rhetorical power of the symbolic action, and he employs it forcefully (11-28,10; cf. Jer 64-52,59 ;13-13,1, etc.)¹⁵.

- 10 But the prophet Hananiah removed the bar
from the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, and
broke it; 11 and Hananiah said in the presence
of all the people,
“Thus said YHWH: So will I break the
yoke of King Nebuchadnezzar of
Babylon from off the necks of all the
nations, in two years.”
And the prophet Jeremiah went on his way.
- ויקח חנניה הנביא את המוטה מעל
צואר ירמיה הנביא וישברהו. ויאמר
חנניה לעיני כל העם לאמר
כה אמר יהוה ככה אשבר את על
נבכדנאצר מלך בבל בעוד שנתיים
ימים מעל צואר כל הגוים,
ולך ירמיה הנביא לדרך.

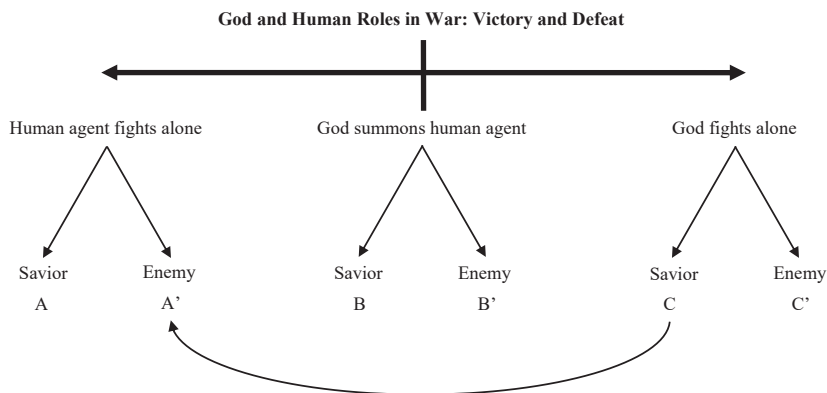
In breaking the yoke of the king of Babylon, Hananiah not only reacts to Jeremiah's symbolic action of wearing the yoke on his neck (Jer 27,2) but also invokes (or even restores) a well-known metaphor used by Isaiah son of Amoz (Isa 9,3; 10,27) and Nahum (Nah 1,13) to describe a release from subjugation as an act of divine deliverance. (Jeremiah uses this same metaphor in his consolation prophecy in 30,8-9.) These texts portray God as the sole warrior who saves his people in time of need and releases them from the yoke of their human subjugators¹⁶. Hananiah follows this prophetic tradition and describes God as a warrior who will subdue the Babylonian king within two years, release the people of Judah from subjugation, and bring those exiled — the king, the temple vessels, and the people — back to Jerusalem.

All of this becomes even clearer when we place Hananiah's prophecy in the context of a theology of war. In previous studies, I have presented a very simple model that situates different relationships between humans and God in war along a continuum¹⁷.

¹⁵ The symbolic actions have been much discussed; see K.G. FRIEBEL, *Jeremiah's and Ezekiel's Sign-Acts* (JSOTSup 283; Sheffield 1999) 136-154, and the literature cited there.

¹⁶ The same metaphor appears in Lev 26,13 and is alluded to in Ezek 34,27-28. Isa 10,27 is the only passage where release from political subjugation is achieved through a human warrior, who is nevertheless summoned by God (v. 26).

¹⁷ See D. ROM-SHILONI, *Theodicy as Discourse*. Justification, Doubt, and Protest in the Face of Destruction (Hebrew Bible Theology) [forthcoming]; ROM-SHILONI, *God in Times of Destruction and Exiles*. Tanakh (Hebrew Bible) Theology (Jerusalem 2009) 162-75 (Hebrew).



At one end of the continuum, war is a matter of only human activity; at the other end, only divine. The model demonstrates the dynamic relationships between them. At the center of the continuum, God as warrior summons the armies of the people and their enemies and is responsible for their activity to either victory or defeat (e.g., 2 Kgs 24,2-3. 20; Jer 4,5-8, poetry; 21,8-10, prose; Ezek 7,20-27; Ps 44,10-17). At the two poles of the axis, however, emphasis is given to only one plane of activity, the human or the divine. At each of these three points (and at points in between), God or human leaders may function as either saviors or enemies, advancing deliverance or destruction¹⁸.

This theological diversity is illustrated in a nutshell within the Book of Jeremiah and has been studied using different methodological approaches. Literary-historical and redaction-critical studies have tended to set distinct theological conceptions in diachronic order and have understood them to reflect hierarchical differences of piety and religious development between royal officials and poets in comparison to the higher stage of prophetic theology¹⁹. Yet, the hierarchical or diachronic parameters used to establish

¹⁸ While developed for the study of sixth-century sources, this model is valid for all reflections on war in the Hebrew Bible (as well as extrabiblical sources), where it helps to illustrate perceptions of both victory and defeat.

¹⁹ G. VON RAD, *Holy War in Ancient Israel* (trans. M.J. DAWN; Grand Rapids, MI 1991; German original 1951) and I.L. SEELIGMANN, "Human Heroism and Divine Salvation—Double Causality in Biblical Historiography", *Studies in Biblical Literature* (trans. R. BLUM; Jerusalem 1992) 62-81 (Hebrew; German original 1963). To give one example, commentators of Jeremiah have categorized Jer 21,1-7 as a Dtr "theological" revision of a more "historical" description of Jer 37,3-10; see already B. DUHM, *Das Buch Jeremia* (KHAT 11; Tübingen 1901) 168-171, and, subsequently, A. ROFÉ, "Studies on the Composition of the Book of Jeremiah", *Tarbiz* 44 (1974-75) 1-29 (Hebrew); W. THIEL, *Die deuteronomistische Redaktion von Jeremia, 1-25* (WMANT 41; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1973) 230-231, among many others. I have discussed the scholarly approaches to the above-mentioned texts in

distinctions among the various sixth-century constituencies do not seem to provide sufficient answers for the theological relationships among them, for two reasons. The first is that these different conceptions of the roles of God and humans in war are used by different speakers in contexts that involve polemics among voices that are recorded within one literary composition (e.g., the Book of Jeremiah). The second is that we can see that this controversy is contemporaneous with what we find in other literary compositions of the sixth century (historiography, prophecy, and psalmic literatures)²⁰.

Alternatively, I argue that all three conceptions are used contemporaneously as of early sixth-century Jerusalem by different authorial circles that are not limited to prophetic ones, and that they often establish clear polemics against each other. In my study of the theological deliberations of sixth-century biblical literature, I have discussed three aspects of these conceptions of war — theology, sociology, and function — and provided the parameters within which to examine the unique features of each of the three conceptions of defeat in war. Theologically, each of these three conceptions illuminates God's activity and power in the historical events by means of specific literary and thematic features. Sociologically, each of these conceptions is mobilized by almost all speakers, yet in different measures of use and with distinct emphases. Hence, functionally, these three conceptions of war each may serve multiple rhetorical purposes, illustrated in different literary genres as determined by the different speakers. The interplay among these conceptions gives us a window into the sixth-century talk to and about God that seeks to fathom God's role in the disaster. I will therefore begin by reviewing the debates over the roles of God and humans in war from a broader perspective that includes the synchronic-contemporary sphere of the early sixth century and leaves open the possibility that those conceptions could have transformed (and probably did transform) over time by further followers/tradents, responsible for the evolution of the Book of Jeremiah.

Focusing on the debate among prophets, the model helps us to see that in Hananiah's prophecy (Jer 28,2-4.10-11) the Babylonian enemy invaded Judah seemingly without God's involvement (A'). Yet God is expected to act as savior, to fight against his people's foes with his omnipotent

D. ROM-SHILONI, "Facing Destruction and Exiles: Inner-Biblical Exegesis in Jeremiah and Ezekiel", *ZAW* 117 (2005) 189-205.

²⁰ See D. ROM-SHILONI, "Theodicy and Protest in Sixth-Century BCE Hebrew Bible Theology", *Theodicy and Protest. Jewish and Christian Perspectives* (eds. B. EGO – U. GAUSE – R. MARGOLIN – D. ROM-SHILONI) (SKI.NF 13; Leipzig 2018) 55-76; and this is discussed comprehensively in my *Theodicy as Discourse*, chapters 6-9 [forthcoming].

forces, and so to free his people from their subjugation ($[C]$). This $A' \rightarrow C$ conception of war is recorded in diverse literary sources of the late seventh and early sixth centuries as either repeated pleas for divine deliverance from human foes pronounced by royal officials (e.g., Jer 21,2) and poets (e.g., Psalm 74), or as prospects of divine salvation proclaimed by the peace prophets ²¹. The military distress described in these accounts is motivation either to seek divine deliverance through prayer or to predict such deliverance through a prophecy of salvation. Thus, while God is not responsible for the impending defeat, he is asked to intervene by saving his people from their military crisis. Consequently, the one who prays, or the prophet who prophesies, expects that the threat of destruction by this enemy acting without divine support (A') will be transformed into an event of divine salvation and victory (C).

Situating Hananiah's prophecy within this $A' \rightarrow C$ conception of war clarifies that he demands inaction and discourages rebellious behavior toward the Babylonians. This observation contradicts the commonly held view that Hananiah, and the peace prophets generally, assisted the rebellious royal circles in Jerusalem ²². On the contrary, Hananiah's repeated words of deliverance in **שברתי את־על מלך בבל** (v. 2b) and **כי אשבר את־על מלך בבל** (v. 4b) promise a solely divine warlike action against the human enemy. Hananiah follows this line of trust in God, repeated in Isaiah's exhortations to both Ahaz and Hezekiah (Isa 7,4, and 8,5-8, etc.; 37,21-38; 30,1-5) and also known within the Neo-Assyrian prophecies (SAA 9 2.4, lines iii 11'-17', mentioned above, etc.) ²³.

²¹ This exact expectation may also be found in fragmented communal laments, which the prophet integrates into his proclamations to either enhance the description of the atrocities (Jer 4,13.19-21; 9,16-20) or to complain about the lack of divine salvation (Jer 8,18-20.21-22; 14,7-9.19-21). Nahum (e.g., Nah 1,1-9.12-13), Habakkuk (3), and Zephaniah (Zeph 2,4-15) call for even more complex perspectives on prophetic activity of that era. Furthermore, this ($A' \rightarrow C$) conception of war appears in consolation prophecies within Jeremiah (e.g., Jer 51,59-64), as well as in prophecies against the nations (e.g., Jer 50,34; 51,36); see n. 29 below, and ROM-SHILONI, *Theodicy as Discourse*, 55-73 [forthcoming].

²² See B. UFFENHEIMER, "Jeremiah's Struggle with the False Prophets", *Studies in Biblical Scholarship in Memory of David Neiger of Blessed Memory* (eds. A. BIRAM et. al.) (Jerusalem 1959) 96-111 (Hebrew); UFFENHEIMER, "The Historical Outlook of Jeremiah," *Immanuel* 4 (1974) 9-17; and OVERHOLT, *Threat*, 30-33.

²³ To broaden our spectrum even more on the peace prophets, it might be of value to draw similarities not only to Isaiah son of Amoz but also to Neo-Assyrian prophecies of the seventh century (restricted to the days of Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal), with their repeated divine commitment to deliver the king from those who threaten his life, be they internal or external enemies. Typologically, those prophecies share two major features: (1) God (or Ištar, and at times other gods) promises protection and deliverance from any human threat against the king (Isa 7,7-9; 37,6-7; SAA 9 1.1, 1.2., 1.4, *et passim*). A repeating and forceful phrase is **אל תירא** (Isa 7,4; 37,6), with its Aramaic cognate: **אל תוחל** (Zakkur inscription, line 13) and the Akkadian phrase: *la tapallah* (e.g., SAA 1.1. lines

Looking at the theological conceptions Jeremiah uses to refute these fragmentary peace prophecies tells us even more about the theological polemics between them. In four passages that quote peace prophecies, Jeremiah counters them with judgment prophecies using the *B'* conception of war, in which God summons humans — here Babylon — as his agent in order to subjugate Judah and the entire region. This is the view of Jer 27,4-8 ²⁴:

... 6 I herewith deliver all these lands to My servant, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon; I even give him the wild beasts to serve him.

7 All nations shall serve him, his son and his grandson—until the turn of his own land comes, when many nations and great kings shall subjugate him.

8 The nation or kingdom that does not serve him—King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon—and does not put its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation I will visit—declares the LORD—with sword, famine, and pestilence, until I have destroyed it by his hands.

... 6 ועתה אנכי נתתי את כל הארצות האלה ביד נבוכדנאצר מלך בבל עבדי, וגם את חית השדה נתתי לו לעבדו.

7 ועבדו אתו כל הגרים ואת בנו ואת בן בנו, עד בא עת ארצו גם הוא ועבדו בו גרים רבים ומלכים גדלים.

8 והיה הגוי והממלכה אשר לא יעבדו אתו את נבוכדנאצר מלך בבל ואת אשר לא יתן את צווארו בעל מלך בבל, בחרב ובדבר ובדבר אפקד על הגוי ההוא נאם יהוה עד תמי אתם בידו.

In four of the other peace prophecies, Jeremiah opposes them with judgment prophecies that use the *C'* conception of war, in which God fights against his own people as sole enemy, causing grave disaster to the people along with those deceiving prophets. Jeremiah 6,15 is a good

5', 24'; 1.4, lines 16', 33'. See M. NISSINEN, "Fear Not: A Study on an Ancient Near Eastern Phrase", *The Changing Face of Form Criticism for the Twenty First Century* (eds. M.A. SWEENEY – E. BEN ZVI) (Grand Rapids, MI 2003) 122-161, esp. 148–161. In prophetic contexts, **אל תירא** also occurs in Zeph 3,16 and in larger numbers in Deutero-Isaiah (e.g., Isa 40,9; 41,10.13.14), Haggai (2,5), and Zechariah (8,13.15). (2) The king is called to stay calm and inactive, thus to put his trust in God's (or the gods') salvation. This demand occurs in specific formulae that are repeated within those prophecies; see **השמר והשקט** (Isa 7,7-9, v. 4), which resembles the words of "the woman Urkittu-šarrat of Calah" to Esarhaddon (SAA 9 2.4, lines iii 11'-17'): *atta lu qālāka Aššur-ahu-iddina* 'You, Esarhaddon, keep silent!'; see M. NISSINEN, *Prophets and Prophecy in the Ancient Near East* (with contributions by C.L. SEOW and R.K. RITNER; ed. P. MACHINIST) (Writing from the Ancient World 12; Atlanta, GA 2003) 114-115; and M. WEIPPERT, "'Ich bin Jahwe'—'Ich bin Ištar von Arbela': Deuterofjesaja im Lichte der neuassyrischen Prophetie", *Prophetie und Psalmen. Festschrift für Klaus Seybold zum 65 Geburtstag* (eds. B. HUWYLER – H.P. MATHYS – B. WEBER) (AOAT 280; Münster 2001) 31-59.

²⁴ See also Jer 27,9-13.14-22; 28,12-14. The *B'* conception of war, according to which God summons a human enemy against his people, occurs at about forty (prose and poetic) passages in the Book of Jeremiah (e.g., Jer 1,13-16; 4,5-8.15-18; 8,10-12.16-17; 19,1-13; 21,8-10; 37,3-10) and in twenty-seven passages within prophecies against the nations (e.g., Jer 25,16-29.30-38; 47,2-7; 51,2-3).

example ²⁵: “Assuredly, they shall fall among the falling (יפלו בנפלים); they shall stumble at the time when I punish them (בעת פקדתיים יכשלו) — said YHWH” (see also 8,10-12). In Jer 14,15-16, against the promises of the peace prophets, God himself is to bring not salvation but sword and famine upon the land, through which both the people and the prophets will be totally annihilated: “those very prophets shall perish (יתמו) by sword and famine” ²⁶; alternatively, in Jer 23,19, the storm will be the divine weapon of war: “Lo, the storm of YHWH goes forth in fury, a whirling storm, it shall whirl down upon the heads of the wicked” (see the entire passage in 23,16-22) ²⁷.

Hence the polemic among the prophets originated in their profoundly different understandings of God's role in the war against Jerusalem. The conception that human enemies were solely responsible for the destruction of Jerusalem and Judah, and that God would surely save his people from their threatening hands — conception $A' \rightarrow C$ — remains at the core of the debate among the prophets. Their paths divided as the situation in Jerusalem deteriorated. The peace prophets continued to hold to the traditional conception (known within eighth- and seventh-century prophecy) and looked forward to the divine salvation of the king and his people, confident that it would shortly occur ²⁸.

In contrast, Jeremiah (and separately and independently, Ezekiel, as well as possibly their followers/tradents) conceived of God's involvement as savior of his people on a chronological continuum. They recognized that this quality had a paradigmatic past, represented by the exodus traditions (e.g., Jer 2,2-3; 11,1-5; Ezek 20,5-10), as well as a promising future, expressed in prophecies against the nations and in prophecies of consolation for the people ²⁹. Yet both prophets, independent of each other, also perceived that God was not taking the role of savior in their own

²⁵ The C' conception of war occurs in sixty-five (prose and poetic) passages in Jeremiah (e.g., Jer 4,3-4.23-28; 9,6-8.9-10; 13,1-11; 19,14-15) and in twelve passages within prophecies against the nations (e.g., Jer 9,24-25; 12,14-17; 46,27-28; 50,11-13.31-32).

²⁶ Cf. בעת פקדתיים, in Jer 8,12. McKANE, *Jeremiah I-XXV*, 187-88 discussed the textual differences between 6,15 and 8,12 and considered the formal difference between פקדתיים and פקדתיים to reside in the active role assigned to God by the former.

²⁷ Jer 37,19, where another peace prophecy is quoted and refuted, contains no explicit reference to the expected defeat. According to Ezek 13,14-15, it is God (and God alone) who will bring to ruin both the city and the deceiving prophets within it.

²⁸ So already OSSWALD, *Falsche Prophetie*, 18-26, esp. 21 and QUELL, *Wahre und falsche Propheten*, 58-61. These peace prophets do not enter at all to questions of justice, and thus do not pay attention to that aspect of divine justice in the theological discussion.

²⁹ References to the $A' \rightarrow C$ conception of war in Jeremiah may be found in either prophecies against the nations (e.g., Jer 50,11-13) and the proximity between judgment to the nations and consolation to Judah (Jer 30,10-11; 46,27-28) or in prophecies of consolation (e.g., Jer 30,5-7.8-9, 31,7-9a.10-14).

historical present — that is, within the period of the destruction, God acted as either summoning the Babylonians against Jerusalem, the *B'* conception of war, or, even more commonly, as his people's fiercest and sole enemy, the *C'* conception of war³⁰. While very difficult to accept theologically, this time distinction has become a remarkable justificatory argument for Jeremiah (and Ezekiel), who recognized that God's role as warrior is his alone to activate. It is God's choice to be present and involved in the current distress, but he may also choose not to save his people³¹. It was only Jeremiah (and Ezekiel) among the true prophets (including earlier prophets like Amos and Hosea) that dared to portray God as his own people's enemy instead.

These conceptual differences among the prophets stand against a whole list of characteristics which all prophets of the late seventh and early sixth centuries (and possibly prophets in general) seem to share. (1) They all argue that they express the words and will of God. (2) They share a set of basic conventions, including the manipulation of symbolic acts (see Hananiah's prophecy in Jer 28,10-11). (3) They all predict the future, although they arrive at opposing visions as to what that future holds³². (4) They are all very much involved in the political agenda alongside the king(s) of their time, and they express different theological points of view on the same issue (namely, war) in the face of the political crisis³³. They all

³⁰ OVERHOLT, "Jeremiah 27–29", 248 indeed wrote "It is to acknowledge with the prophets that Yahweh's dealings with his people were not exhausted in the positive action of the *Heilsgeschichte* [...]"; but he did not perceive the larger and more complicated picture within true prophecy, which I suggest we should understand along a temporal continuum.

³¹ This extreme conception of God as sole warrior and enemy of his own people developed as a counterclaim to feelings of divine abandonment and impotence (e.g., Jer 8,19-20.21-22; 14,7-9). See ROM-SHILONI, *Theodicy as Discourse*, ch. 9 [forthcoming].

³² From the perspective of content, prediction of the future is the only role expressed in the fragmentary quotations of the peace prophets, yet it is but one of the roles practiced by so-called true prophets. There seems to be no distinction in principle between short-term and longer-term predictions, and they are all legitimate prospects delivered by true prophets, who may feature both; see "shortly" in Jer 26,16 (עתה מהרה), lacking in LXX; cf. Hananiah's prophecy in Jer 28,2.11: "in two years" (בְּעֵד שְׁנָתַיִם יָמִים); "forty years" (אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה), a generation or a human lifespan, in Ezek 29,11.12.13; "seventy years" (שִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה) in Isa 23,15.17; Jer 25,11.12; 29,10; or three generations in Jer 27,7 (וְעִבְדוּ אֹתוֹ) (כל הנגרים ואת בנו ואת בן בנו). See M. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21–37* (AB 22A; New York 1997) 606, and Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20* (AB 22; New York 1983) 104-105.

³³ Here I disagree with the common appreciation of prophets as "political advisors" to the kings whose theological message was only secondarily added (as *Fortschreibungen*); see, e.g., R.G. KRATZ, *The Prophets of Israel* (trans. A.C. HAGEDORN – N. MACDONALD) (Critical Studies in the Hebrew Bible 2; Winona Lake, IN 2015) 51-64. I consider such perspectives to be oversimplifying a much deeper theological debate among prophets already in the pre-exilic era. The prophets' complicated connections with the political establishments in Israel and Judah often stand against the narrow political advisory role that is

admit that the Babylonian emperor, Nebuchadnezzar II (and his subservient allies), fought against Judah and its Davidic kings, and they commonly perceive that YHWH was involved in the distress that finally turned into defeat, destruction, and waves of deportation. Yet they contest over the different possible roles of God and human leaders. Their grave disagreement on the conception of God as warrior and savior of his people from their human enemies actually appears to be a debate over the *time* of salvation, not excluding the divine commitment to save in itself.

All that these prophets share may explain the fierce struggles among them, as well as the great efforts they made to undermine the legitimacy of their opponents ³⁴.

III. PROPHETS STRUGGLE (AMONG THEMSELVES) OVER INTELLECTUAL LEADERSHIP, OVER PROPHETIC AUTHORITY

Jeremiah's opponents seem to have occasionally argued that he was never sent by God to prophesy (Jer 26,9; see also 29,25-28b; 43,2-3). This accusation may be reflected implicitly in the prophet's response in 26,12-15: "It was YHWH who sent me to prophesy [...] For in truth, YHWH has sent me to you" (and see Amos 7,15; Mic 3,8). A much fiercer and more elaborate picture may be traced in nine different accusations levelled by Jeremiah (and separately and independently by Ezekiel) against the peace prophets in an attempt to delegitimize their status and their message. These denigrations and accusations accompany the ten fragmentary peace prophecies (introducing or concluding them) and accumulate particularly in Jer 23,9-40 ³⁵:

- (1) They prophesy in the name of God, although they were never sent by him: **לֹא שְׁלַחְתִּים וְלֹא צִוִּיתִים וְלֹא דִבַּרְתִּי אֲלֵיהֶם** "I have not sent them or commanded them. I have not spoken to them" (Jer 14,14.15; Ezek 13,6).

often claimed; see R.R. WILSON, *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia, PA 1980) 225-252, 287-292.

³⁴ See LONG, "Prophetic Authority", 7: "the conflict between prophets must have been one between persons of essentially the same social identity and location". Long recognized, however, that prophetic tradition "has flattened these social ambiguities, and highlighted only the religious issue".

³⁵ For a thorough discussion of this unit, see OVERHOLT, *Threat*, 45-46, who saw the intention to condemn and abuse the peace prophets (68), although he constantly emphasized that the genuine debate was over the message, which was wrong for the historical time and circumstances (71, 86-104, *et passim*). See also the major commentaries.

behaviour” (Jer 23,32; NJPS: “with their reckless lies”). Together with the priests who support and encourage them, they commit adultery: **כִּי גַם נְבִיאַם גַּם כֹּהֵן חֲנָפוּ** and **כִּי מִנְאֲפִים מְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ** “For the land is full of adulterers [...] for both prophet and priest are godless” (23,10.11) and **נֶאֱוָה וְהִלֵּךְ בְּשָׁקֶר** “adultery and false dealing” (v. 14; see also 29,23).

- (8) They prophesy and encourage audiences of sinners and blasphemers: **וְחִזְקוּ יְדֵי מְרֵעִים** “they encourage evildoers” (Jer 23,14.17).
- (9) Finally, and worst of all, prophets both in Jerusalem and in Samaria have prophesied in the name of Ba'al: **וַיִּתְּעוּ אֶת עַמִּי אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל** “they prophesied by Ba'al and led My people Israel astray” (23,13, alluding to Deut 13,2-6; see further Jer 2,8). They caused the people to go astray and worship other gods: **וַיַּחֲשִׁיבוּ אֶת עַמִּי לְהַשְׁכִּיחַ אֶת שְׁמִי בְּבִעַל** “they plan to make My people forget My name, by means of the dreams [...] just as their fathers forgot My name because of Ba'al” (Jer 23,27) ⁴⁰.

Taken together, these nine accusations strengthen the idea that they are anxious attempts to confront and overturn the recognition the prophet Jeremiah assumed the peace prophets would receive from their audiences, because they considered themselves to be and were acknowledged by their contemporaries as messengers of God ⁴¹. Looking more carefully at the actual criticism, two separate issues are at stake: first, rhetoric against *the prophets themselves*, denigrating their credibility, their personal ethics, and even their religious piety; and, second, accusations against *their sources*

⁴⁰ See MCKANE, *Jeremiah I–XXV*, 574–575, who aptly distinguished between **נִבְאָה**, which stands for peace prophecies, and **נִבְאָה בְּבִעַל**, which stands for apostasy and idolatry, *contra* W. RUDOLPH, *Jeremia*. Die Klagelieder (KAT 17; Gütersloh 1939, 2nd ed. 1962) 151. Blasphemy also stands behind Jer 23,17: **לְמַנְאֲצֵי** “men who despise Me”; but cf. LXX (λέγουσιν τοῖς ἀποθουμένους τὸν λόγον κυρίου) and Syriac (וְאִמְרִין לְאִילִין) **וַיִּתְּעוּ אֶת עַמִּי אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל** (דְּמִרְגֻזִין בְּפִתְנָמָה דְּמִרְיָא), which read those words in the construct: **לְמַנְאֲצֵי דְּבַר יְהוָה** “to those who blaspheme the word of God”; see also MCKANE, *Jeremiah I–XXV*, 577. The two versions seem to struggle with the theological assault of God and thus can hardly be deemed original.

⁴¹ Cf. SHARP, *Prophecy and Ideology*, 111–124, who argued for a non-monolithic observation of the issue of false prophecy in Jeremiah. Focusing on but three of the accusations against the peace prophets — worshipping the Ba'al (**בְּעַל**), committing adultery (**נֶאֱוָה**), and promoting the message of peace or well-being (**שְׁלֹמִים**), with the accusation of falsehood (**שָׁקֶר**) — Sharp pointed out different literary layers within this list of accusations, distinguishing between pro-*golah* and Judean Deuteronomistic traditions. I do not find this discussion compelling. On the one hand, Sharp loses the focus of false prophecy with those terms that are clearly not limited to the struggle among prophets; on the other hand, she does not substantiate her claim that these accusations are connected to pro-*golah* and Judean editorial layers that are opposed to one another. I would consider this debate as shared by the two communities and thus reflected in both literatures.

of authority⁴². The peace prophets were accused of lacking references, so to speak, for their prophecies. Criticism of their sources of authority puts their own thoughts on the same level as visions, dreams, and magical divinations — all uncredited⁴³. In contradistinction, Jeremiah in his counter-speech to Hananiah (28,7-9) places himself in the long-standing tradition of prophets “from ever” (מן העולם, v. 8a).

Although visions (termed as חזוה and חזון, as well as משה and חלום) were completely acceptable by eighth- and seventh-century prophets, a substantial change seems to have occurred with Jeremiah, who lumped these prophetic traits together as unacceptable (and to an extent this is also the case with Ezekiel)⁴⁴. Jeremiah (and Ezekiel) are the first to stand against those terms: against חזוה and חזון (Jer 14,14; 23,16; and fiercely in Ezek 13,1-16); against משה (Jer 23,33-40); and against חלום (Jer 23,27.28-29.32; 27,8-9)⁴⁵. For Jeremiah, all three are false, designed to mislead people, in vain, worthless, non-revelatory, illegitimate traits of prophecy

⁴² LONG, “Prophetic Authority”, 6-20, presented diverse dimensions of legitimacy and authority of the prophets as persons, including legends, signs, and references to their personal behavior that would have been recognized by their respective communities as signs of such authority. The discussion below focuses on the sources of authority.

⁴³ Cf. OVERHOLT, “Jeremiah 27–29”, 244, who emphasized the content, the message, as the sole issue under debate. LONG, “Prophetic Authority”, 19-20, on the other hand, suggested that words of peace were denigrated as illegitimate only retrospectively, and “much later” (19).

⁴⁴ Jeremiah does not use the verb חזוה at all, and the noun חזון designates only the illegitimate prophets (Jer 14,14; 23,16). Ezekiel 13 denigrates the prophets of Israel as producing חזוה or חזוה שוא חזיתם (vv. 6.7.8.9.23), as also חזוה שוא חזיתם (v. 16), all designate illegitimate prophecy. However, the verb חזוה occurs once in reference to Ezekiel’s prophecy, in a quotation (Ezek 12,27), and six times the noun חזון designates a true prophecy (Ezek 7,13.26; 12,22.23.24.27, although two of those are in quoted words, and they are refuted by the prophet). Compare to חזון as an acceptable term by eighth- and seventh-century prophets in Isa 1,1; Amos 1,1; Mic 1,1; Hab 1,1; משה in Isa 13,1; 15,1; 17,1; 19,1; 21,1.11.13; 22,1; 23,1; 30,6; Nah 1,1; Hab 1,1. And much less frequent, these terms do appear even later, in Zech 9,1; 12,1; Mal 1,1. חלום was well accepted as a revelatory means of prophecy, as in Num 12,6; Deut 13,4.6, where the dreamer parallels the prophet, and both are excluded because they prophesy in the name of other gods, not because of the basic distinctions of their revelatory device; see MCKANE, *Jeremiah I–XXV*, 590; Isa 29,7; and then late in Joel 3,1. חלום is also a revelatory device in nonprophetic contexts; see Gen 20,3.6; 28,12; 31,10.11.24; 1 Sam 28,6.15; 1 Kgs 3,5.15.

⁴⁵ Other magical divinatory devices were rejected in Deut 18,9-14, although the dream is not mentioned in the latter. Cf. MCKANE, *Jeremiah I–XXV*, 588-589, who argued that Jer 23,25-32 cannot be dependent on Deut 13,2-6; 18,14-22, which focus on false divinatory devices that are used to address other gods, and R.P. CARROLL, *Jeremiah* (OTL; Philadelphia, PA 1986) 473-474, who argued that the dichotomy between dream and word is “a false dichotomy” (472) and did not recognize the significant transformation suggested above.

because, although they are offered in the name of God, they are uttered by people who were never sent by God ⁴⁶. In contrast, Jeremiah's visions are scant, and they are termed by the root **ראה** (e.g., Jer 1,11.13; 24,1.3) ⁴⁷.

On Jeremiah's side, we find an alternative conception of prophetic activity that I tend to see as an effort to build confidence in the prophet's words as the words of God in Jer 23,28-29:

<p>28 Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream; and let him who has received My word report My word faithfully! How can straw be compared to grain? — says the LORD. 29 Behold, My word is like fire — declares the LORD — and like a hammer that shatters rock!</p>	<p>28 הנביא אשר אתו חלום יספר חלום ואשר דברי אתו ידבר דברי אמת, מה לתבן את הבר נאם יהוה. 29 הלאו כה דברי כאש נאם יהוה, וכפטיש יפצץ סלע.</p>
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Formulating his words in the singular, as a general rule, Jeremiah establishes a distinction between a prophet who narrates a dream (**יספר חלום**) and a prophet who speaks the true word of God (**ידבר דברי אמת**) ⁴⁸. The proverb **מה לתבן את הבר** suggests a clear hierarchal distinction between the straw (**תבן**), which for the most part would be used to feed domestic animals, and the valuable grain (**בר**) that sustains humans (so Qimhi) ⁴⁹. Verse 29 adds two different similes to God's words: the fire that consumes all, the enormous effect of which is the large spatial spread of fire that often cannot be stopped (e.g., Jer 21,12.14 ; 17,4 ; 15,15 ; 5,14), and "the hammer that shatters a rock," which is effective in a very precise and limited area but nonetheless may destroy a rock, the substance of earth ⁵⁰. The two similes together enforce the total effect of God's words and, not surprisingly in this context of countering the peace prophets (and only

⁴⁶ McKANE, *Jeremiah I–XXV*, 590, accepted Qimhi here on the distinction between deceiving prophets of their own hearts (v. 26) and those to whom God indeed spoke.

⁴⁷ Likewise, Ezekiel's visions of God are termed **מראות אלהים** (Ezek 1,1; 8,3.4; 40,2; 43,3). **ראה** is further the term used in Amos (7,1.4.7) and in Zechariah's visions (1,8; 2,1.5; 3,1; 4,2; 5,1.5.9; 6,1), whereas **חזה** designates the false vision of magicians (Zech 10,2).

⁴⁸ So Rashi, who learned from the use of **סיפר חלום** the nonsense of those dreams in complete difference from true prophecy. Qimhi pointed out the connection between those who dream and their message of peace. For the rhetorical formulation in the singular, see J.R. LUNDBOM, *Jeremiah 21–36* (AB 21B; New York 2004) 207–208. The rhetorical play between plural and singular is also well used in Jer 28,8–9, where judgment prophets are in the plural, whereas the illegitimate peace prophets are presented in the singular, each as the one single advocate whose words need future approval.

⁴⁹ Cf. CARROLL, *Jeremiah*, 472, who argued that "the poetic images in vv. 28b–29 have no inherent connection with word or dream". The discussion here illustrates their integral role in this context.

⁵⁰ For a textual discussion of this passage, with clear preference for the LXX version of this poetic v. 29, see F.H. POLAK, "Jer 23:29—An Expanded Colon in the LXX?" *Textus* 11 (1984) 119–123. But Polak did not consider the content of either of those similes.

implicitly their prophecies), these two similes are used to illustrate only the destructive powers of God's words ⁵¹.

Hence, in Jer 23,28-29 the prophet indeed integrates his denigrative observations on the prophets' personalities, on their sources of authority, and implicitly on their positive message ⁵². But Jeremiah does not characterize the nature of this "word of God" that he designates as "true" (23,28) ⁵³.

Our information regarding the opposition between the two circles of prophets, the peace prophets and Jeremiah (and separately, Ezekiel), and their struggle over prophetic authority is admittedly fragmented ⁵⁴. So here I would like to add one more point that will help bridge the gap. We do have records of the struggle. As presented above, we can validate the peace prophets' message of assurance with biblical and extrabiblical sources. But we have only fragments of what they were quoted as having presumably said. We have much more information on the long list of accusations against peace prophets made by Jeremiah (and Ezekiel), and we have the long prophetic collections of Jeremiah (and Ezekiel) in front of us from which we could gather the alternative (presented by each of the two prophets and carried on by their followers/tradents to the respective books). The added piece I present here to tie all those together belongs to this larger component, to the prophetic alternative that constitutes legitimate prophecy.

⁵¹ This negative perspective on the true prophecy accords thematically with Jer 28,8-9 and is clearly different from the repeated formula in Jeremiah, which emphasizes the antonyms of destruction and recreation (e.g., Jer 1,9-10; 31,28). To further substantiate the negative theme behind the two similes, cf. Nah 1,6, where setting consuming fire and shattering rocks serves to describe the divine wrath. Cf. Rashi, who took those two similes to convey the personal position of the prophet, in accordance with Jer 20,9 or Ezek 3,13. This understanding seems to me to be a theological escape from the current context that refers to the actual (indeed, negative) nature of the divine words of prophecy.

⁵² Cf. LUNDBOM, *Jeremiah 21–36*, 208-209, who, while elaborating on different aspects of God's words in the Book of Jeremiah, did not specify this one-sided choice, which I take as a choice that intentionally refutes the hopeful peace prophecy.

⁵³ Another characterization of the true prophets is framed in Jer 23,18-22 as a rhetorical question, which suggests that the true prophet belongs or has intimate closeness to God, being part of his *סוד*; i.e., a divine council, parallel to *עדה* (Ps 111,1; see also Ps 82,1) or *קהל* (Gen 49,6). This intimate connection does not transform the prophet into the divine realm, as in Isaiah 6, but elevates him from those who are not considered standing in God's council. See MCKANE, *Jeremiah I–XXV*, 581-582.

⁵⁴ Although I have accentuated the theological background of the struggles among prophets in this article, the social background of these struggles for prophetic authority should not be neglected. LONG, "Prophetic Authority", 3-20, aptly defined "authority" as "a social reality" (4), "a term of relationship, standing for a social reality, and our understanding must be alive to the fluidity of specific situations in which authority may be claimed or exercised" (3).

I suggest that the alternative paradigm of a prophet who speaks **דבר יהוה** was established by Jeremiah in order to address this major issue under debate on the sources of authority. Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah (reflecting the prophet's thoughts and carried on by his followers/tradents) developed a whole different line of argumentation to validate its divine authority. The practical ways to achieve the goal of speaking in the name of God — proclaiming “YHWH's words” (**דבר יהוה**), as in Jer 23,18-22) or repeating “the word of his mouth” (**שמוע דבר מפי יהוה**), Ezek 3,17) — was to phrase the prophetic words with echoes and allusions to pentateuchal materials, literary and mostly legal traditions and phraseology taken from different covenant traditions⁵⁵. Hence, while the peace prophets relied on visions, dreams, thoughts of their own hearts, etc., the prophet Jeremiah considered pentateuchal materials to supply greater legitimacy and authority for himself and his messages.

This clear intellectual and rhetorical choice constitutes a significant transformation in prophecy from the intuitive prophecy that is based on different divinatory devices such as visions and dreams to a prophecy that is based on oral/written traditions. As presented by scholars, the Book of Jeremiah refers to earlier and contemporaneous prophetic, psalmodic, and wisdom traditions, though scholars debate over the question of whether those references reflect the prophetic style of the prophet Jeremiah or only *Fortschreibungen* additions by his followers/tradents⁵⁶. I here argue

⁵⁵ See previous discussions of pentateuchal traditions in Jeremiah, where gradually I focused on those of priestly origin, and on harmonizations, made already within the first compositional stage, of different pentateuchal traditions within poetic and prose passages alike. ROM-SHILONI, “Facing Destruction and Exile”; ROM-SHILONI, “The Torah in Jeremiah: Interpretive Techniques and Ideological Perspectives”, *Shnaton: An Annual for Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies* 17 (2007) 43-87 (Hebrew); ROM-SHILONI, “Actualization of Pentateuchal Legal Traditions in Jeremiah: More on the Riddle of Authorship”, *BZAR* 15 (2009) 254-281; ROM-SHILONI, “Ezekiel and Jeremiah: What Might Stand Behind the Silence?” *HeBAI* 2 (2012) 203-230; ROM-SHILONI, “How can you say, ‘I am not defiled’?” (Jer 2,20-25): Allusions to Priestly Legal Traditions in the Poetry of Jeremiah”, *JBL* 133 (2014) 757-775; ROM-SHILONI, “On the Day I Freed Them from the Land of Egypt”: A Non-Deuteronomistic Phrase within Jeremiah's Covenant Conception”, *VT* 65 (2015) 621-647; ROM-SHILONI, “Compositional Harmonization: Priestly and Deuteronomistic References in Jeremiah—An Earlier Stage of a Recognized Interpretive Technique”, *The Formation of the Pentateuch. Bridging the Academic Cultures of Europe, Israel, and North America* (eds. J.C. GERTZ – B.M. LEVINSON – D. ROM-SHILONI – K. SCHMID) (FAT 111; Tübingen 2016) 913-942.

⁵⁶ References to various literary traditions in Jeremiah have been discussed at length and often connected to literary-historical and redactional perspectives on the book's evolution; see, e.g., preliminary studies in the introductions to the commentaries of W.L. HOLLADAY, *Jeremiah* 2 (Hermeneia; Philadelphia, PA 1986) 35-70, and G. FISCHER, *Jeremiah* 1-25 (HThKAT; Freiburg 2005) 75-93 and their polarized conclusions on authorial questions.

that the use of pentateuchal traditions (and possibly other inner-biblical references) is a stylistic marker of the prophet Jeremiah (and separately also of Ezekiel), which was subsequently carried on by his followers/tradents. Furthermore, the prophet's intertextual familiarity with earlier (or contemporaneous) traditions designates a transformation within prophetic intellectual leadership by the end of the seventh and early sixth centuries BCE.

Jeremiah is certainly *not* taken here as the initiator of this inner-biblical midrashic use of pentateuchal traditions in prophecy. Examples of that same trait were presented (and much discussed) in Hosea, Amos, Isaiah son of Amoz, and Micah, just as allusions to prophetic and psalmodic materials characterize Obadiah, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah over the seventh century (yet these prophets seem to allude to pentateuchal materials to only a minor extent). Nevertheless, the abundance of examples within the Book of Jeremiah in both poetry and prose, crossing layers of literary evolution, involves a great variety of pentateuchal materials within Deuteronomy, Priestly sources, and Holiness legislation, as well as on literary traditions that are both non-D and non-P. The often precise verbal similarities to the invoked traditions tell of the greater phenomenon these allusive strategies have captured in the prophetic writings of the late seventh and early sixth centuries ⁵⁷. These different allusions to pentateuchal materials serve to form and to thematically structure judgment prophecies and prophecies of consolation, just as this allusive trait becomes a major device in the theodical arguments of Jeremiah's prophecies ⁵⁸.

It is plausible that the growth of different collections of pentateuchal materials during that same time period (already over the seventh century) enabled this development within prophecy. The exposure to such materials further influenced the emphasis on covenant theologies that demanded obedience to specific pentateuchal commandments. This same trait can be located in Ezekiel and subsequently in other prophetic compositions of the Persian period, which strengthens the option of a broad transformation in the conceptions of the prophetic role, prophetic activity, and prophetic writing ⁵⁹.

⁵⁷ D. ROM-SHILONI, "The Forest and the Trees: The Place of Pentateuchal Materials in Prophecy as of the Late Seventh/Early Sixth Centuries BCE", Congress Volume Stellenbosch 2016 (eds. L.C. JONKER – G.R. KOTZE – C.M. MAIER) (VTSup 177; Leiden 2017) 56-92.

⁵⁸ See the discussion on covenant traditions and metaphors in Jeremiah in D. ROM-SHILONI, "The Covenant in the Book of Jeremiah: On the Employment of Marital and Political Metaphors", *Covenant in the Persian Period*. From Genesis to Chronicles (eds. R. BAUTCH – G. KNOPPERS) (Winona Lake, IN 2015) 153-174.

⁵⁹ Compare to E. OTTO, "Jeremia und die Tora: Ein nachexilischer Diskurs", *BZAR* 7 (2007) 134-182, esp. 160, who thought that polemics over covenant conceptions belonged

IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This article has advanced two arguments about the conflict among prophets by the late seventh and early sixth centuries BCE. First, although active within the political arena of Judah *alongside* kings and officials, the struggles among the prophets had clear theological grounds, which I locate in the different perspectives within the conceptions of the roles of God and humans (kings and peoples) in war. Looking at this polemic from that theological point of view allows us to trace points of similarity and nearness among prophets of that critical era in Judah, as well as clarify the great distance between them.

Second, conflicts between prophets were about status and authority, each side claiming to be the true messengers of God and striving to undermine the legitimacy of the other. While evidence we might desire to prove this link is lacking, I would like to suggest that the great increase in the literary phenomenon of evoking pentateuchal traditions in Jeremiah (and also in Ezekiel) is actually a response to this struggle. In order to illustrate specific divine demands of obedience, the prophet substantially grounds prophecy in pentateuchal traditions, some literary but mostly legal. This was a clear intellectual and rhetorical choice, one that brought about a significant transformation in prophecy. Affecting three dimensions of prophecy — prophetic role, activity, and writing — Jeremiah (the prophet, and subsequently his followers/tradents, thus the book) seems indeed to stand at the core of a change in prophetic intellectual leadership⁶⁰.

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only to a postexilic context. Indeed, the emphasis on the God–people covenant relationship was further developed by Zechariah, as in Zech 1,6. See also M.J. BODA *The Book of Zechariah* (NICOT; Grand Rapids, MI 2016) 39–41, 82–83, for the reliance of Zechariah on Jeremiah, and on Deut 18,18.20, as well as the combination of God's דבר and חק in Deut 4,45; 5,1.31.

⁶⁰ This suggestion stands against the common scholarly conceptions of prophecy, which make a clear distinction between Jeremiah and Ezekiel established already within nineteenth-century scholarship, and in its broad framework sustained the time; see ROM-SHILONI, “Forest and Trees”, 86–92.

SUMMARY

This article traces two significant issues in the polemic among prophets in the Book of Jeremiah: the role of theology in their struggle with political events and the polemics in the effort to establish authority. It is argued, first, that there are significant theological distinctions between the prophets on the concept of war and on the roles played by God and by humans in victory and in defeat. Second, the struggle over their sources of authority motivated a genuine transformation within prophetic activity (oral and written) that seems to have occurred by the late seventh and early sixth century BCE.

FORMS OF ESTHER: HEBREW SATIRE AND GREEK NOVELLA

The Old Greek version of Esther is significantly different from the Hebrew version ¹. It has six major additions, which are the most substantial differences between the versions. The book begins and ends differently, with a dream (Esther A) and the dream's interpretation (Esther F), which set the tone of the book and work out the message of the story in a way the beginning and ending of the Hebrew version do not. Two of the king's edicts are written out rather than summarized, providing details of his reasoning and, by extension, his character (Esther B and E). There are two prayers, which provide evidence of the protagonists' piety (such evidence is almost entirely absent in the Hebrew version) and explain ethical challenges found in the Hebrew version (Esther C) ². Finally, Esther's appeal to the king is given with more detail, which provides additional characterization and heightens the suspense (Esther D). Not only are the divine name and other words for God peppered throughout the additions, but other religious aspects are introduced as well. These have been well documented: God's providence (Esther A and F), his intervention into history (Est D,8), the value of the fast and prayers (Esther C), and the significance of Jewish worship (Est C,26-28) ³.

¹ There is a general consensus that the LXX version of Esther was translated from a text very much like the version found in the MT. See, for example, E. TOV, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis, MN ³2012) 317. E. BICKERMAN (*Four Strange Books of the Bible*. Jonah, Daniel, Koheleth, Esther [New York 1967] 186) dates the Greek translation to as early as 80 BCE. Recently, J.-C. HAELEWYCK ("The Relevance of the Old Latin Version for the Septuagint, with Special Emphasis on the Book of Esther", *JTS* 57 [2006] 439-473) has proposed that the VL version of Esther is a witness to a version older than the LXX. He argues that the MT version was translated and expanded into a Greek version that is represented by the VL, which is a more coherent retelling of Esther than either the LXX or Alpha text. The LXX version, then, was created as a "mechanical harmonization" of the MT and VL versions (467). While Haelewyck argues convincingly that the VL is a more coherent narrative than the LXX version, it does not follow that the more coherent version must have preceded the version that has contradictions. Rather, the contradictions of the LXX version (such as the imperfect summaries of the edicts in Est 3,13 and 8,11-13) are the more difficult readings. It seems more likely that a scribe would smooth out contradictions than mechanically harmonize versions in such a way as to create contradictions.

² Questions about Esther's sexual intimacy with a Gentile and lack of concern for dietary laws are laid to rest in her prayer, in which she proclaims her hatred of the king's bed and refusal to eat at the feasts (Est C,26b.28). Mordecai's prayer shows that, despite the dire circumstances, he has confidence in God's deliverance (Est C,8-10). See C.A. MOORE, *Daniel, Esther, and Jeremiah*. The Additions (AB 44; Garden City, NY 1977) 205.

³ MOORE, *Daniel, Esther, and Jeremiah*, 158.

The differences between the MT and the LXX versions go beyond the major additions, though, and they change not only the plot, but also the genre⁴. The changes in the beginning and end of the Old Greek (Esther 1–3 and 8–10) remove satirical elements present in the MT, and without those elements the Greek version is a novella with a serious tone and suspenseful dramatic irony. The Hebrew version satirizes the Persian king's feasting and rash legislation, the irrevocability of Persian law, and the self-destructive nature of the empire. The Greek adaptation, on the other hand, portrays a wedding and failed coronation, followed by Haman's manipulation of the king to have the Jews killed, and ends with the Jews defending themselves against their enemies with wisdom and courage⁵.

I. THE GENRES OF THE HEBREW AND GREEK VERSIONS

Although the book of Esther was long considered a history, its form is a literary guise. It is best understood as a political satire. Although Lucilius is credited with defining satire as a new literary genre in the second century BCE, Weisman argues that "the features which characterize satire as a literary phenomenon did exist in the Bible, hundreds of years before satire was fashioned as 'genre' in the classical world"⁶. According to Weisman, political satire includes at least some of the following: it negatively criticizes political figures and institutions; it can include curses

⁴ H.M. WAHL ("Das Buch Esther als methodisches Problem und hermeneutische Herausforderung: Eine Skizze", *BibInt* 9 [2001] 25-40, here 35) notes that treatments of LXX Esther tend to focus on the additions without their context: "Kontextuell gesehen, hängen die isoliert betrachteten Zusätze in der Luft. Die Exegese ist deshalb gefährdet, die redaktionell intendierte Endgestalt des Textes der Septuaginta, deren zusammenhängende Kommentierung ein wirkliches Desiderat der Forschung ist, beharrlich zu ignorieren". He also writes that there is more potential in studying the Old Greek version than simply text-critical discussions of Esther (37).

⁵ See also L.M. WILLS, *The Jewish Novel in the Ancient World* (Ithaca, NY 1995) 249. Wills suggests this transformation also, but in an appendix about the *Testament of Abraham*: "The farcical Hebrew *Esther*, which never mentions the name of God, stands in sharp contrast to Greek *Esther*. The latter reins in the satirical tendencies of the former, consciously or unconsciously, and piously reinterprets all events to the greater glory of God: dramatic visions and pretentious royal decrees are added, and Esther's earnest self-examination becomes the new center of gravity of the work. [...] At any rate, the extant versions reflect quite opposite poles". Wills does not make further argument beyond this observation, but he does write that the *Testament of Abraham* is a satire, while other versions of it are not (256 n. 17). So, perhaps versions of the *Testament of Abraham* may serve as a parallel to versions of Esther in their literary transformations, in addition to versions of Daniel, discussed below.

⁶ Z. WEISMAN, *Political Satire in the Bible* (SBLSS 32; Atlanta, GA 1998) 4, with fuller discussion on pp. 1-8.

or delight at a political figure's downfall; it has a marked tone of insult; it exploits another literary genre for political means; it camouflages its criticism in various ways; and it makes use of grotesque, paradoxical, and absurd elements to further insult the object of criticism⁷. Additionally, satire is constructive: "If the critic simply abuses, he is writing invective; if he is personal and splenetic, he is writing sarcasm; if he is sad and morose over the state of society, he is writing irony or mere gloom"⁸. As I will demonstrate, many of these characteristics are found in the Hebrew version of Esther⁹.

As Berlin explains, there is a thin line between historiography and fiction in ancient literature, and Esther's portrayal of Persia is stereotypical of stories about Persia during that time¹⁰. She argues that "the author of Esther was not writing history; he was *imitating* the writing of history, even making a burlesque of it. Historiography is not a comic genre, and Esther is very comic"¹¹. She compares Esther's conclusion (which informs the reader that the events it has presented can be found in official Persian annals) to the end of "The Princess and the Pea", which emphasizes the accuracy of its account, stating, "the pea was put in the museum, and it is there now, unless someone has carried it off"¹². The text wears a historiographical mask in order to satirize the Persian empire, which, at times, it amusingly glorifies to excess (for example, 1,1-9)¹³. Because satire can

⁷ WEISMAN, *Political Satire in the Bible*, 7-8.

⁸ F. KILEY – J. M. SHUTTLEWORTH (eds.), *Satire from Aesop to Buchwald* (New York 1971) 479.

⁹ C. VIALLE (*Une Analyse Comparée d'Esther TM et LXX. Regard sur Deux Récits d'une Même Histoire* [Leuven 2010]) has also compared and contrasted the Hebrew and Old Greek versions of Esther, but she comes to a different conclusion regarding the genre of the Hebrew version. While she mentions in the introduction that some authors find Hebrew Esther to be a comical text (xlvi-xlvii), she cautiously describes the genre of the book as a wisdom tale. She states that the objection to Esther as a wisdom tale is the lack of reference to God and religious practice, and this can be answered by finding references to God "entre les lignes ... l'on trouve une allusion voilée à la Pâque, dans la chronologie, au coeur du récit" (161). This is not the only objection to reading Esther as a wisdom tale, though. J.L. CRENSHAW ("Method in Determining Wisdom Influence on 'Historical' Literature", *JBL* 88 [1969] 129-142, here 141-142) points out the tenuousness of the hypothesis that Esther could be a wisdom tale, noting that such a designation focuses on broad characteristics of the book, such as its setting in a royal court, over details that would undermine it, such as the emphasis on national identity that has been observed in Hebrew Esther. He states: "it is difficult to conceive of a book more alien to wisdom literature than Esther" (141).

¹⁰ A. BERLIN, "The Book of Esther and Ancient Storytelling", *JBL* 120 (2001) 3-14, here 10.

¹¹ BERLIN, "The Book of Esther and Ancient Storytelling", 7.

¹² BERLIN, "The Book of Esther and Ancient Storytelling", 7.

¹³ Several authors have described Esther as a satire. See, for example, D. CLINES, *The Esther Scroll. The Story of the Story* (JSOT 30; Sheffield 1984) 33, and WEISMAN, *Political Satire in the Bible*, 139.

be present and undetected by the reader (yet still integral to comprehending the work), the meaning can be elusive or even contradictory for its readers.

Booth has delineated four steps for determining stable irony that show that Esther has the paradoxical qualities of satire ¹⁴. First, there must be intention, which can be determined through incongruities in the text. Booth distinguishes this concept from the fallacy of authorial intention:

Talk about the ‘intentional fallacy’ is sound insofar as it reminds us that we cannot finally settle our critical problems by calling Voltaire on the telephone and asking him what he intends with his sentence about rival kings. Our best evidence of the intentions behind any sentence in *Candide* will be the whole of *Candide*, and for some critical purposes it thus makes sense to talk of the *work’s* intentions, not the author’s ¹⁵.

We can assume that for Esther, the same author who composed such a masterful plot did not neglect to critique the Persian king’s obvious failings that are seen again and again throughout the story. We can also assume that this characteristic is *intentional* — that the author made that choice just as competently as he composed the main plot of the story. Second, Booth writes that a reader encountering stable irony finds a message that is covert and requires reconstruction. This means that as one reads, one must interpret the text in a way that does not follow the words on the page. The removal of Vashti at the beginning of the story is comical rather than infuriating, and, if one reads it as a satire, even the slaughter of over 75,000 people can be seen as dark comedy rather than a cause for anger or sadness ¹⁶. Third, the reader can determine that the reconstruction is stable by making a

¹⁴ W. BOOTH (*A Rhetoric of Irony* [Chicago, IL 1974]) uses the term “stable irony” to refer to instances where there is a demand on the reader to understand the text as ironic. Irony is “a figure of speech in which the actual intent is expressed in words which carry an opposite meaning”, which can be found in a statement or in the broader narrative (KILEY – SHUTTLEWORTH, *Satire from Aesop to Buchwald*, 476). See E.M. GOOD, *Irony in the Old Testament* (Philadelphia, PA 1965) 25-33, for an extended discussion of the definition of irony. He discusses irony as a quality found not only in comedy such as satire, but in other literary genres as well, such as Greek tragedy.

¹⁵ BOOTH, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 11.

¹⁶ GOOD (*Irony in the Old Testament*, 26) discusses differences between types of comedy: “Clearly there is both ironic and nonironic comedy. It has been suggested that irony has in it something of pain. Comic irony includes a hurt. Yet to be comic it cannot hurt too much. ... But if [comedy] does not sting, it is not ironic but merely funny”. J.W. WHEDBEE (*The Bible and the Comic Vision* [Cambridge 1998] 9) also describes comedy as an umbrella that includes satirical critique, such as one finds in Hebrew Esther: “The laughter is often complex and ambivalent, ranging from sardonic and subversive to joyous and celebrative”. In my discussion, then, the terms comedy and comical include both the lighter, excessive description of the king’s court in chap. 1 and the stinging critique in the result of the foolish king’s command in chap. 9.

decision about the author's belief system. For instance, one reading Esther as a satire ultimately decides that the author cannot think well of a king who so carelessly decrees that the Jews will be destroyed. Finally, the reader reconstructs the story so that it is in line with what the author is assumed to believe. Since the reader cannot believe the author thinks well of such a king, it is necessary to reconstruct what the author has said to mean that the king is careless and neglectful.

For ancient readers, satire was distinguished from other genres by "the sharp criticism of corruption and ridicule in public life" ¹⁷. Unlike ancient Greek, there is a lack of discussion of literary genres in ancient Hebrew literature, but Weisman has pointed to four terms used to describe the genre of satire — ridicule, mockery, taunt, and laughter — that are also found in ancient Hebrew and may show a propensity for satire: לִעֵג, שִׁנְיָה, הַתָּל, and שַׁחֵק ¹⁸. His book also explores elements of satire in other Hebrew texts, such as Isaiah 14 and 1 Kings 12. Furthermore, Wills observes novelistic qualities in both versions of Esther, arguing that the novel is unlike earlier Hebrew narrative because it is a written genre, rather than an oral one. He writes:

In the ancient world as well as the modern, the novel may arise as a result of the emergence of a new entrepreneurial, literate class no longer bound to the heroic art forms and values of the previous centuries. And likewise, artisans of the novel may look upon the aspirations of this class in either two ways: with pride and hope or with a satirical questioning ¹⁹.

We find in the versions of Esther both perspectives that he observes: satirical in the Hebrew and dignified in the Greek.

Gordis has made a strong case that the author of the Hebrew version of Esther was a Jew narrating as a Persian chronicler ²⁰. His reasons include: Mordecai is described as "the Jew", a designation that a foreigner, not a fellow Jew, would give him; the lists of the names of the king's counselors and Haman's sons seem to bog down the narrative, but would be necessary in an account of the court; and throughout the text, an excessive

¹⁷ WEISMAN, *Political Satire in the Bible*, 2.

¹⁸ WEISMAN, *Political Satire in the Bible*, 4.

¹⁹ WILLS, *The Jewish Novel in the Ancient World*, 248.

²⁰ R. GORDIS, "Religion, Wisdom and History in the Book of Esther — A New Solution to an Ancient Crux", *JBL* 100 (1981) 359-388, here 375-378. M.V. Fox (*Character and Ideology in the Book of Esther* [Grand Rapids, MI 2001] 144) disagrees, stating that his argument is undermined "by the fact that he is comparing Esther to something that is not extant or even secondarily attested". This is taking the argument too far, however; it does not need to read like Persian chronicles, but only to imitate the Israelite chronicles, since the audience is Jewish, not Persian.

use of synonyms gives the text a quality of “officialdom”. The end of the book professes to be a history, and it includes a reference to Mordecai, but once again designates him as “the Jew” — the other — someone presumably of a different ethnicity than the narrator. One insight from this observation is that it explains the absence of the God of Israel and other religious elements in the story, which would not matter to a Persian narrator ²¹.

The narrator becomes a key character in the story, one who serves as a filter through whom the reader sees in order to understand the author’s true meaning. The use of a false narrator may not be seen in other biblical texts, but it is a common device in structural irony, in which the author “introduces a structural feature that serves to sustain a duplex meaning and evaluation throughout the work” ²². This structural feature can be a “fallible narrator”, who “manifests a failure of insight by viewing and appraising his own motives, and the motives and actions of other characters, through what the reader is intended to recognize as the distorting perspective of the narrator’s own prejudices and private interests” ²³. In the case of the Persian chronicler, his prejudice is for the greatness of the Persian Empire, which he believes he is sharing in the story of Esther. The author expects his readers to be aware of this fallible narrator, which puts them in the right state of mind to read satire disguised as historiography.

In the Greek text of Esther many satirical elements of the Hebrew version are missing or changed, but it maintains the irony essential to the story. However, this irony no longer elicits laughter but, instead, creates suspense. The dramatic irony in the Greek version of Esther also has the intimacy between author and reader that features in satire: the narrator provides the audience with both subtle and explicit information of which the characters are unaware ²⁴. This knowledge shared between narrator and audience provides ironic effects later ²⁵. Good writes that “the irony in Greek tragedy is so striking because, unlike modern drama, the spectators know the plot in advance. [...] The audience wonders not how it will

²¹ GORDIS, “Religion, Wisdom and History in the Book of Esther”, 375.

²² M.H. ABRAMS – G.G. HARPAM, *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (Stamford, CT ¹¹2015) 186.

²³ ABRAMS – HARPAM, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 187.

²⁴ Abrams and Harpham write that dramatic irony “involves a situation in a play or a narrative in which the audience or reader shares with the author knowledge of present or future circumstances of which a character is ignorant; [...] Writers of Greek tragedy, who based their plots on legends whose outcome was already known to their audience, made frequent use of this device” (*A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 187-188).

²⁵ BOOTH, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 63.

all turn out, but how the dramatist will manipulate the characters, when he will accomplish the action”²⁶. The dream in Addition A of the Greek version of Esther sets up the reader for the outcome of the story in a way that the beginning of the Hebrew does not. Other elements of dramatic irony are present in both the Hebrew and Greek (such as the king and Haman’s ignorance of Esther’s identity, which the audience knows all along). The comic nature of the Hebrew version is still perceptible in many of these instances of dramatic irony, but in the Greek version the seriousness of the account makes it primarily suspenseful²⁷.

While the Greek version of Esther shares this quality with Greek tragedy, it is clearly not a tragic tale. The Old Greek version of Esther is best described as a novella. It is, as Wills argues, a “Jewish novel”, a potentially misleading term that nevertheless indicates that the book arose as a written work rather than an oral one²⁸. He writes: “Like novels cross-culturally, the Jewish novels manipulate the written medium, utilizing such techniques as description, dialogue, and psychological introspection”²⁹. Wills finds these characteristics in a rudimentary form in Hebrew Esther and in a more developed form in Greek Esther³⁰.

Wills observes changes in genre in the Book of Daniel that provide a parallel to those in Hebrew and Greek Esther. He discusses additions made to Daniel after the Maccabean Revolt and writes:

The reader is introduced to the interior life of protagonists who are in a state of psychological jeopardy — a jeopardy not fully experienced in the older version of Daniel 3 — in much the same way that the reader of Greek novels has access to the emotions of the protagonists through the inclusion of letters, prayers, and monologues³¹.

In the Greek version of Esther, the added prayers and letters also provide access to the inner thoughts and motives of the main characters. When

²⁶ GOOD, *Irony in the Old Testament*, 18.

²⁷ WEISMAN (*Political Satire in the Bible*, 3) writes that for satire “tone and mood are no less important than formal means [of identifying the genre]”.

²⁸ WILLS (*The Jewish Novel in the Ancient World*, 7) writes: “The lack of a term in the ancient world for the Jewish novel — or for the Greek and Roman novel — forces us to utilize, in place of any known ancient genre category, a hermeneutical model of our own naming that can explain the data before us. To be sure, *novel* as a genre title could be criticized as conveying more to the modern reader than is actually intended here. The Jewish novels, for example, are shorter than modern novels or even Greek and Roman novels”. Wills rejects the term “novella” because it is used to describe oral narratives, but since “novel” is problematic, I retain “novella” with the qualification that here it refers to a product of a literate class.

²⁹ WILLS, *The Jewish Novel in the Ancient World*, 212.

³⁰ WILLS, *The Jewish Novel in the Ancient World*, 115.

³¹ WILLS, *The Jewish Novel in the Ancient World*, 53.

Wills analyzes the transformation in the Book of Daniel between versions, he perceives it to be a radical change of genre:

At the risk of polarizing the options, then, it appears that there was a sort of seesaw pattern at play in the development of the Daniel tradition, by turns serious and comic. This 'genre jumping' is a puzzling problem, although it happens often enough in the history of literature. It calls into question, however, any attempt to use a later layer as a key to understanding the reception of the previous one ³².

II. SATIRICAL ELEMENTS IN THE HEBREW AND CHANGES IN THE GREEK VERSION

In this section, I examine some of the attempts to satirize the Persian king and his institutions in the Hebrew version and compare these with the Greek adaptation. As it is in the nature of satire to be potentially believable ³³, the Greek adaptation does not need to have major differences from the Hebrew in every case to remove satire from the story. Some have interpreted the changes either as omissions due to redundancy or unimportance, or as additions for clarification ³⁴, but I discern among these differences a trend that fundamentally reworks the story and its meaning. The Greek additions cement this trend in both theology and characterization ³⁵. In the Hebrew version, the characters' "individual make-up is schematic and simplistic, and lacks the psychological depth of drama. It mainly highlights one particular trait that signifies one character over against another, as in a puppet theater" ³⁶. On the other hand, four of the major Greek additions (Esther B, C, D, and E) give the depth needed for a dramatic and serious retelling to three main characters: Esther, Mordecai, and the king.

³² WILLS, *The Jewish Novel in the Ancient World*, 66.

³³ "Is not a source of irony's attraction and repulsion alike that it may plausibly be taken literally, invites us to take it literally, makes a certain sense when taken literally?" (GOOD, *Irony in the Old Testament*, 22).

³⁴ See E. TOV, "The LXX Translation of Esther: A Paraphrastic Translation of MT or a Free Translation of a Rewritten Version?", *Empsychoi Logoi*. Religious Innovations in Antiquity (eds. A. HOUTMAN – A. DE JONG – M. MISSET-VAN DE WEG) (Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity 73; Boston, MA 2008) 507-526, here 510-511; and H. KAHANA, *Esther*. Juxtaposition of the Septuagint Translation with the Hebrew Text (Leuven 2005) 445-450.

³⁵ As WAHL ("Das Buch Esther als methodisches Problem und hermeneutische Herausforderung", 33) writes: "Beide griechischen Texte sind weit mehr als eine bloße Übersetzung, sie sind gezielte Fortschreibungen und damit theologische Interpretationen".

³⁶ WEISMAN, *Political Satire in the Bible*, 148.

1. *The Wedding and Coronation*

In Esther 1, several differences paint diverging pictures of the Persian king and his court. In v. 5 the Greek has a small addition. The Hebrew states, “when these days were completed”, but in Greek it is “when the days *of the wedding* (τοῦ γάμου) were fulfilled”, making the king’s extravagant six-month-long feast less frivolous by connecting it to an important event. Tov points out that the feast in the Greek is now parallel to the wedding feast given for Esther in 2,18, which is a wedding feast in the Greek, but simply “Esther’s feast” in the Hebrew ³⁷. Later, in the Hebrew version of 1,11, the king tells his eunuchs to “bring Queen Vashti before the king, wearing the royal crown, in order to show the peoples and the officials her beauty; for she was fair to behold”. However, in the Greek the king tells his eunuchs to “bring the queen to him to appoint (βασιλεύειν) her, and to place (περιθεῖναι) the diadem on her, and to show her beauty to the leaders and the peoples because she was beautiful”. While King Ahasuerus is simply showing off and objectifying his wife, King Artaxerxes is calling Astin to coronate her in the context of her wedding ³⁸, with the reference to her beauty listed last ³⁹.

In Esth 1,16 the king’s eunuch indicates the meaning of the queen’s refusal by saying: “Not only has Queen Vashti done wrong to the king, but also to all the officials and all the peoples (על-כל-השרים ועל-כל-העמים) who are in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus”. In the first chapter, there have been hints of the book’s ironic purposes through the use of exaggeration, and this is one more instance that should not be lost on the reader. It is a clue that Booth classifies as a conflict of belief: “There is a literal statement that rests on assumptions ... that the reader is expected to reject; he then must shift to firmer ground” ⁴⁰. The king’s reaction is surprising, and the reader needs to decide if the author is showing the king to be a villain or if the author agrees with the king’s course of action. As the story continues, the king will repeatedly make questionable decisions, yet he is not portrayed as an antagonist. Because of this, the reader must adjust for irony here and throughout the story.

The Greek of 1,16 is not significantly different from the Hebrew, but because of the added wedding and coronation the eunuch is justified in his

³⁷ Tov, “The LXX Translation of Esther”, 211.

³⁸ Tov, “The LXX Translation of Esther”, 211.

³⁹ In the Hebrew the king is Ahasuerus and the queen Vashti, while in the Greek the king is Artaxerxes and the queen Astin. I refer to them each by their different names to distinguish them.

⁴⁰ BOOTH, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 74.

statement. Astin was called primarily for political reasons, so her refusal to appear truly would have “dishonored not only the king, but all the rulers and governors” (πάντας τοὺς ἄρχοντας καὶ τοὺς ἡγουμένους) who were gathered as well, as the Greek states ⁴¹. The Greek has reduced the scope of those who are dishonored: instead of the entire empire, which is quite an exaggeration, the Greek refers only to the gathered governors ⁴². Vashti stands out in the Hebrew as one of the most honorable characters in the story because of her refusal; Astin’s refusal makes her disrespectful and bad-mannered.

2. *The Irrevocable Persian Law*

The eunuch completes his speech in 1,19 of the Hebrew version with the suggestion: “and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes so that it may not be altered” (וַיִּכְתֹּב בְּדָתִי פֶרֶס־וּמְדִי וְלֹא יִעֲבֹר). The Hebrew uses the word דָּת here, a Persian loan word found twenty times in Esther (and only once in the rest of the Bible, except Aramaic sections) to refer to an irrevocable law or edict. This verse is important because it introduces the concept of the unchangeable Persian law, which is key for the overall plot and provides a number of opportunities for mockery. The Greek translation is almost identical, but it has an imperative rather than a purpose clause: “and may it not be administered differently” (καὶ μὴ ἄλλως χρησάσθω). This subtle difference is important because, while a reader of the Hebrew text would now understand every Persian decree to be by its nature irrevocable, a reader of the Greek translation may understand this concept to apply only to this particular decree. In a comparison of a passage of the Hebrew and Old Greek, De Troyer describes some of the ways in which the Greek translator creates a new narrative from the Hebrew original. One of the distinctions she gives is that in the Old Greek, “a law is a law and as such it brooks no protest; in our opinion this is a minimal attitude towards ‘the law,’ one which barely, if at all, reflects the irrevocability of laws which some are so inclined to read in the Hebrew narrative” ⁴³.

⁴¹ VIALLE (*Une Analyse Comparée d’Esther TM et LXX*, 194) writes: “Dès lors, la réaction de la reine paraît d’autant moins justifiée et par conséquent, fait figure de caprice, de désinvolture voire de refus d’assumer ses obligations royales. Aussi, la réaction du roi — chagrin, puis colère — est-elle tout à fait compréhensible ici”.

⁴² KAHANA, *Esther*, 48.

⁴³ K. DE TROYER, *The End of the Alpha Text of Esther* (SBLSCS 48; Atlanta, GA 2000) 274-275. Her incredulity about the irrevocability of the Persian law in the Hebrew is surprising in light of Esth 1,19. Indeed, as Fox (*Character and Ideology in the Book of Esther*, 22)

In both the Hebrew and Greek of 1,20 the eunuch suggests a decree that would remove Vashti *with the effect* that all women would then honor their husbands. However, in the Hebrew of v. 22 this desired response, that men would rule their households, is dispatched as an actual law across the empire: “every man should govern (כל־איש שרר) in his house and speak according to the language of his people”. Only a foolish king would expend the effort and cost to have such a decree sent throughout his kingdom. Reading the Greek, on the other hand, one assumes that the decree contains no more than the dismissal of Astin. In v. 22 it simply gives the result of the decree (as one would expect from v. 20) rather than its contents: “so that they had fear in their homes” (ὥστε εἶναι φόβον αὐτοῖς ἐν ταῖς οἰκίαις αὐτῶν).

In 2,1 the Hebrew states that the king “remembered (זכר) Vashti and what she had done and what had been decreed against her” (ואת אשר־עשתה (ואת־נגור עליה). Some commentators interpret the king’s thoughts to be colored by regret ⁴⁴. Here the Hebrew version shows the king to be powerless as a result of his own drunken words and unchangeable edict. The Greek instead states: “the king ... no longer remembered (οὐκέτι ἐμνήσθη) Astin, remembering what he said and how he condemned her” (μνημονεύων οἷα ἐλάλησεν καὶ ὥς κατέκρινεν αὐτήν). King Artaxerxes is not powerless at all. He does *not* think back on her fondly, but rather remembers her removal. Furthermore, Kahana proposes that the change from passive to active voice may show the translator’s interest in showing that the king had personally judged her, rather than being manipulated by his advisors ⁴⁵.

Later in the chapter the narrator of the Hebrew version mocks the Persian law again by informing his audience about the law of women, a royal edict that requires the girls brought to his harem to participate in a year-long beauty regimen (v. 12). The Greek is almost verbatim except that it lacks an equivalent for the words “law of women” (דת הנשים), thus allowing the reader to understand the lengthy beautification process to be a custom instead of a royal edict.

In the next chapter, comedy is still present, but it is darker and more disturbing than earlier in the book. In 3,1-12 both versions describe Haman’s promotion, Mordecai’s refusal to bow to him, Haman’s plot to kill the Jews, and the issuing of the edict that puts his plot into action.

writes: “The notion that the Persians and Medes could not repeal their own laws, even ad hoc decrees, is an essential presupposition in the biblical book of Esther”.

⁴⁴ For example, FOX, *Character and Ideology in the Book of Esther*, 26-27, and A. BERLIN, *Esther* (Philadelphia, PA 2001) 22.

⁴⁵ KAHANA, *Esther*, 69.

In 3,13 we learn the contents of the edict. In Hebrew it states, “to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate (להשמיד להרג ולאבד) all Jews, young and old, women and children”. At this point the author of Esther is no longer content pointing out the failures of the Persian government with silly laws and unrestrained banquets. First, we learned about the recklessness with which a stupid king can create laws, but now, with the introduction of genocide, we learn about the terror that a wicked advisor can create when such a king follows his counsel. Despite the disturbing aspect of this chapter, the subject is lightened by the excessive synonyms that describe their destruction — one example of overkill in the story ⁴⁶. As Berlin says, in Esther “the rule for vocabulary, as for drinking, seems to be ‘the more the better’” ⁴⁷. The comedy is also seen in the excessive punishment of a small transgression. Because Mordecai has offended Haman, he seeks a royal edict to wipe out all of his people. Ahasuerus does not question Haman’s accusation or motives, but simply gives in to his request. The Greek lacks the extra synonyms. It only states, “to destroy (ἀφανίσαι) the race of the Jews”. This verse is followed by Addition B in the Greek, a grave letter written by Artaxerxes explaining the decree and its necessity. Artaxerxes is much more involved in the decree than Ahasuerus, and he is more level-headed about it.

Next, in 3,14, the Hebrew describes this edict officially as a נד, setting this disturbing declaration in stone, so to speak: a royal edict is unalterable. Yet, based on other edicts in the story, there may be a comical side to this one as well. Certainly, those who are already familiar with the ending know that the opposite will happen, as Berlin writes: “the book sets out a threat to the Jews so that the Jewish audience can watch with glee and laugh with relief as it is overcome” ⁴⁸.

Once again, in this scene in the Hebrew version there is a clue for stable irony. In 3,15, the scene ends with Haman and the king feasting, while the citizens of the empire are thrown into confusion. The fact that the king’s law has already caused chaos before it has been carried out shows the reader the type of king that he is. Why would the author continue to portray him in such an unsuspecting light? Clearly the people of the empire realize the magnitude of the law that has been created and react to it; the reader may have the same reaction. The Greek, on the other hand, includes the long letter from the king after v. 14 explaining the serious threat he

⁴⁶ B.W. JONES, “Two Misconceptions about the Book of Esther”, *CBQ* 39 (1977) 171-181, here 178.

⁴⁷ BERLIN, *Esther*, xxvii.

⁴⁸ BERLIN, *Esther*, xxii.

believes the Jews pose to them. In that context, the confusion the people experience could be a reaction to hearing that they live with an enemy in their midst.

3. *The Self-Destructive Nature of the Persian Empire*

In Esther 4–7 the plot contains irony, but within the context of the Hebrew version and the Greek adaptation this irony is either comic or dramatic respectively. Esther's decision to appear before the king unsummoned at the end of chap. 4 is suspenseful in both versions, but in the Hebrew it is also comic irony because, while the king easily removed Vashti for not coming when called, Esther comes when *not* called in chap. 5, thus breaking the irrevocable decree. Yet the king spares her life and even rewards her. The Greek has two additions, chaps. C and D, expressing Esther's and Mordecai's prayers and detailing Esther's courageous appearance before the king. Chapter 6 is ironic in both versions, as Haman's plan backfires, and he is forced to exalt Mordecai instead of seeing him executed. Finally, in chap. 7 Esther reveals everything to the king, who has Haman executed. As the true villain of the story is removed, the story becomes brighter in both versions: in the Hebrew the satire becomes sharper, and in the Greek a happy ending is drawing near.

In chap. 8 the results of Esther's plea for help to Ahasuerus are difficult to take seriously. The king permits a decree to be written to help them, but in 8,9 of the Hebrew the decree "was written, according to all that *Mordecai* commanded, to the Jews". Ahasuerus's scribes are called not for the king to dictate a new royal edict, but for Mordecai to do so! In the Greek, however, the decree "was written for the Jews, whatever he commanded" (ὅσα ἐνετείλατο). The Greek is ambiguous in this verse regarding who wrote the decree, but according to 8,10 Artaxerxes is the author⁴⁹. While in 8,10 the Hebrew states that "he wrote letters in the name of King Ahasuerus", the Greek version says it "was written by the king". Tov notes that in v. 9 "in the rephrased Greek version, the letter was sent only to the Jews. [...] the] MT, on the other hand, explicitly mentions separate dispatches of the letter to the 'Jews and to the satraps, the governors and the officials'"⁵⁰. So, in the Hebrew, Mordecai rather than the king

⁴⁹ KAHANA (*Esther*, 330) believes the Greek assumes Mordecai is the one commanding, but as Esther has been mentioned most recently in the text, it would make the most sense that if the king himself were not the one commanding (which the text states in 8,10), then Esther would be the subject implied in the verb.

⁵⁰ TOV, "The LXX Translation of Esther", 513.

writes a decree to the Jews, the government officials, and all the provinces, whereas in the Greek the king himself writes a letter to the Jews, stating what was commanded to the government officials and all the provinces. The content of the letter to the Jews (8,11) in the Greek is also different and will be explored below.

In the Hebrew of v. 10 this decree is sent “by mounted couriers riding on fast steeds bred from the royal herd” (האחשתרנים). The efficient Persian postal system delivers news that the Jews now have permission to destroy, kill, and annihilate the king’s own subjects, and nothing less than the royal horses are being used to deliver the news even more expediently. The Greek, however, simply states that “they sent the letters by letter carriers”. Kahana suspects that the translator did not know the meaning of the word האחשתרנים (royal), which only occurs elsewhere in 8,14, where it is absent in the Greek version. She states, though, that “it may be that he preferred not to render האחשתרנים [...] because it seemed to him to be a superfluous exaggeration”⁵¹. In light of the other differences reviewed so far, this second explanation seems more likely.

Chapter 8 in the Hebrew continues to provide more irony, particularly because this second decree in v. 11 has almost identical wording with the first that was issued, but it brings about the opposite result⁵²: “The king allowed the Jews who were in every city to assemble and defend their lives, to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate (להשמיד להרג ולאבד) any armed force of any people or province that might attack them, with their children and women, and to plunder their goods”. Here is another strong “conflict of belief” clue about the king. Could a trustworthy narrator so casually describe the first law about the destruction of the Jews and just as casually describe the second law allowing the Jews to do the same thing? The reader can conclude that this turn in the plot is a satirical jab: the Persian king will foolishly allow others to establish unchangeable laws that not only destroy foreigners, but even his own people.

Meanwhile the Greek gives a different decree: “to keep their laws in every city, both to come to their own aid and to deal with their opponents and their adversaries as they wanted” (χρησθαι τοῖς νόμοις αὐτῶν ἐν πάσῃ πόλει βοηθῆσαι τε αὐτοῖς καὶ χρησθαι τοῖς ἀντιδίκους αὐτῶν καὶ τοῖς ἀντικειμένους αὐτῶν ὡς βούλονται). This decree relates primarily to the accusation Haman gave in 3,8 to the king against the Jews, stating that

⁵¹ KAHANA, *Esther*, 334.

⁵² Y. RADDAY, “Esther with Humour”, *On Humour and the Comic in the Hebrew Bible* (eds. Y. RADDAY – A. BRENNER) (Bible and Literature Series 23; Sheffield 1990) 295-313, here 311.

their laws are different, and they do not keep the king's laws. It not only lacks the satirical element in the Hebrew, but it adds practicality and makes it even more serious by recalling Haman's lie against them.

Jones dismisses accusations of excessive violence regarding the edict in the Hebrew of 8,11, assuming the second decree made the first ineffective: "who would be so stupid as to observe Haman's obsolete edict, not knowing of the second one, published more efficiently" ⁵³? However, the Hebrew is ambiguous about the relationship between the second edict and the first. It is possible that the reader is expected to believe that the king's subjects still follow the first edict because it is irrevocable. This means that by one edict Persians are forced to wipe out the Jews, and by the second the Jews may do the same in return (but are more successful based on 9,12-16). Here the author shows the self-destructive quality of the Persian law when given by a thoughtless king. The Greek, on the other hand, includes a statement from the king urging people not to follow the first edict (E,17-18). In light of this addition, Jones's comment about the first edict being obsolete is applicable to the Greek version, but not necessarily to the Hebrew.

Just in case a reader of the Hebrew version has not understood the irony in chap. 8, Esth 9,1 makes it clear: "when the king's command and edict were about to be executed, on the very day when the enemies of the Jews hoped to gain power over them, but which had been changed to a day when the Jews would gain power over their foes [...]." However, the Greek only tells the reader that "the letters written by the king arrived". While the Hebrew drives home the point that, just as Haman first talked the king into the destruction of the Jews, Esther and Mordecai have changed his mind to decree the opposite, the Greek suppresses mentions of violence against the king's subjects and maintains a dignified tone regarding the king ⁵⁴.

In 9,4-5 the Hebrew describes Mordecai's rise and the slaughter that took place:

For Mordecai was powerful in the king's house, and his fame spread throughout all the provinces as the man Mordecai grew more and more powerful. So the Jews struck down all their enemies with the sword, slaughtering and destroying them (והרג ואבדן), and did as they pleased to those who hated them.

⁵³ JONES, "Two Misconceptions about the Book of Esther", 180.

⁵⁴ KAHANA (*Esther*, 361) thinks it is possible that the phrase is a later addition in the Hebrew, and its unnecessary explanation of the obvious (i.e., that the story has reversed) does seem out of character for the subtlety of the narrator. She also finds it possible, however, that the translator omitted it for "apologetic reasons", which I find more likely.

Both verses are almost entirely missing in the Greek, which simply states: “For the command of the king came to pass to be renowned in the entire kingdom” (προσέπεσεν γὰρ τὸ πρόσταγμα τοῦ βασιλέως ὀνομασθῆναι ἐν πάσῃ τῇ βασιλείᾳ) ⁵⁵. While the Hebrew continues to show how the king’s power can be exploited, first by Haman and then by Mordecai, the Greek emphasizes the king in v. 4. In v. 5 the Greek completely omits the description of the devastation brought on by the Jews. The Hebrew once again uses three synonyms (though one is different from the formula found throughout the book) to describe the killing of the Persians, and the Greek lacks them as it has earlier in the book ⁵⁶.

As if the first royal edict granting the Jews permission to destroy their enemies did not make the king look foolish enough, at Esther’s request he proclaims a second one in 9,13-14, giving the Jews a second day to slaughter more of his Persian subjects! “If it pleases the king, let the Jews who are in Susa be allowed tomorrow also to do according to this day’s edict, and let the ten sons of Haman be hanged on the gallows”. The change in the Greek is very slight: “Let it be given to the Jews to be done as today, in order to hang the ten sons of Haman”. In the Greek he gives permission for a second day, but it does not mention a royal edict or have the running joke of irrevocable laws. Furthermore, she asks for and is granted a second day *for the purpose of* hanging the sons of Haman (who are, in both versions, already dead). It is unclear why a second day of destruction is needed in the Greek to expose the bodies of the sons, or why Esther did not simply ask for their bodies to be exposed. However, since there is a reason given, this second edict in Greek is not such a gratuitous day of killing.

The number of those killed in the Greek, compared with the Hebrew, follows this trend of diminishing the overkill of the Hebrew version. The Hebrew states that in Susa 500 and the ten sons of Haman were killed on the first day (9,12), 300 on the second day (9,15), and 75,000 in the provinces on the first day (9,16). In the Greek, 500 are killed in Susa the first day, including the ten sons of Haman (9,12), 300 on the second day (9,15), but only 15,000 in the provinces (9,16). This is further evidence

⁵⁵ KAHANA (*Esther*, 369-370) explains the definition of ὀνομασθῆναι in this context with examples of forms of the root conveying “fame” or “to be famous” in the LXX of Jos 6,27, 2 Chr 26,8, and Jer 25,29. She inserts Mordecai as the subject, however — “(that Mardahaïos) be known” — which is not as likely in context as the command of the king.

⁵⁶ While Vialle is unconvinced of a comical reading of Hebrew Esther, she notes that the beginning of chap. 9 of the Greek version of Esther shows that version clearly cannot be read as such (VIALLE, *Une Analyse Comparée d’Esther TM et LXX*, 236).

that changes in the Greek version reduce the exaggerated slaughter of Persian citizens found in the Hebrew version.

III. RESULTS

The Hebrew version of Esther portrays a foreign king who has seemingly limitless power (except over laws already given in his name), which he gives to anyone who asks of it (1,21; 2,4; 3,10; 7,2; 8,8; 9,12), and whose primary goal as king is to host and attend extravagant banquets (1,3; 2,18; 3,15; 5,5; 7,1). Persian royal decrees are issued for every matter, great and small, and are equally bureaucratized and unchangeable. Because the royal decrees all come from the king, an entire empire is micro-managed by a king who thinks only of himself. They range from the removal of the queen (1,21) to a command for all husbands to be masters of their households (1,22), from year-long cosmetic practices for girls in the king's harem (2,12) to genocide (3,12). The Persian postal-system is used to race these laws, be they ludicrous or frightening, all over the empire (1,22; 3,15; 8,14). The king's advisors are flatterers and yes-men, who keep their high status while easily manipulating him (1,16 – 2,4). Vashti is a dignified queen, who is removed for reasonably refusing to appear before the king and his drunken party. The king is so unwise that one of the most level-headed acts in the story angers him, and he is easily convinced that this (rather than his own unpredictability) will turn the empire upside-down.

The Greek version paints a different picture. The king has limitless power but makes use of it in reasonable ways (1,19; chap. B; 8,11.) He takes the advice of his counselors, writes his own decrees, and gives well-reasoned arguments for their institution (B,2-5; 8,10.) Each of the king's edicts in the Greek is appropriately made by him, unlike the petty laws of the Hebrew version. The laws are not necessarily irrevocable (E,17-18.) The king's lavish parties have a purpose (1,5; 2,18.). Astin treats her new role as queen with contempt, as she refuses to be present at her coronation, and the king wisely removes her. Haman is deceptive and manipulative when he convinces the king to create a law for the destruction of the Jews. Finally, Artaxerxes lives up to his description in 10,2, while the actions of Ahasuerus make the verse laughable ⁵⁷.

⁵⁷ VIALLE (*Une Analyse Comparée d'Esther TM et LXX*, 347) makes a similar observation of LXX Esther: "De manière générale, le roi perse, les Perses et les institutions de l'État sont vus sous un angle positif, ce qui n'est pas le cas dans le TM".

IV. CONCLUSION

Good states that “comic irony ... laughs to bring about amendment”⁵⁸. The Hebrew version of Esther is not only an amusing and exciting story; it is a critique of the Persian empire as weak and inferior to Jewish institutions. Moore has noted that in Esther the king is mentioned 190 times, but God is never mentioned⁵⁹, and, as Weisman points out, it is Ahasuerus, rather than Esther or Mordecai, who is present throughout the book from start to finish and is the main character⁶⁰. (The Greek, however, starts and ends the book with Mordecai in Additions A and F.) In the Hebrew version of Esther, the omnipotence given to the king is terribly misplaced, given the king’s pettiness and extravagance, and the reader perceives this from a storyline in which the king’s weaknesses nearly result in the deaths of the Jews in Persia. Yet, through shrewdness and cunning wisdom, Esther is able to manipulate this weakness to save her people at the expense of thousands of the king’s own subjects.

The laws of Persia are also a source for mockery. In the Hebrew version of Esther the Persian law, which cannot be changed, comes from a fool. The irrevocable law is potentially destructive for both Jews and Persians. Any unchangeable law coming from a human being would be questionable, but one coming from such a man as king Ahasuerus is an embarrassment with potentially deadly consequences. What the Hebrew version of Esther illustrates is the opposite of the plain message on the page: a silly, childish king who cannot think for himself does *not* make for a strong and powerful leader with acts of “power and might” (10,2). Laws from such a person cause confusion and instability at best, and death and destruction at worst.

What can account for a story mocking the failings of the Persian king and his institutions? Perhaps the pro-Persian sentiment in Isaiah 45 can serve as an example of attitudes the author of Esther wished to curb. In Isa 45,1 the Persian king Cyrus, a foreign monarch, is surprisingly called the Lord’s “anointed”. Fried argues that the term is used to “legitimate him as the Davidic monarch”⁶¹, and she reads behind Isa 45,9-13 an indication that “his audience understood this and was aghast. How could the prophet imply that God had handed over to a foreigner a theology that

⁵⁸ GOOD, *Irony in the Old Testament*, 26.

⁵⁹ C. MOORE, *Esther* (AB 7B; Garden City, NY 1971) xxxii.

⁶⁰ WEISMAN, *Political Satire in the Bible*, 148.

⁶¹ L.S. FRIED, “Cyrus the Messiah? The Historical Background to Isaiah 45:1”, *HTR* 95 (2002) 373-393, here 374.

belonged to the Davidic king?"⁶². Furthermore, she points to Cyrus's actions that validated him as the Lord's anointed: "Cyrus was able to do what a legitimate king must do. [...] He rebuilt the temple, ordered the temple vessels replaced in it, and permitted the Jews to return to worship their God in Zion restored"⁶³. Perhaps the author of Esther was among those aghast at the description of a foreign king as the Lord's anointed and hoped to reduce excessive admiration for the Persian empire⁶⁴.

The Greek adaptation, on the other hand, does not contain this satirical message. It comes from a time when the Jews *had* experienced religious persecution from a foreign king, so the political critique is more serious and approached with caution. Bickerman notes that both 1 and 3 Maccabees contain similar threats against the Jews from their foreign leader and states: "Jewish exclusiveness surprised and irritated the Greeks from the beginning [...] In point of fact, the Jews boasted of their loyalty to their Macedonian rulers"⁶⁵. It is no surprise that the Greek version of Esther goes to great lengths to defend the Jewish people, their laws, and their allegiance to the political leader of the day. The Hebrew version makes no attempt to defend the Jews, nor does it try to show them as law-abiding citizens, nor does it even explain how Esther upheld her own laws and customs in a foreign environment. As a satire, it has no need to do so; furthermore, overt clarifications of moral problems would distract from its purpose. The Greek version, on the other hand, reflects a political situation during different times. How could the potential annihilation of Jews in the story continue to be treated so lightly with persecution still fresh in their memory? Their amusement at the satire likely faded, or maybe even became repugnant, so the story was adapted to fit its day, to show the courage of Esther and the salvation of her people and to assert that they are "governed by the most righteous laws and are children of the highest, greatest, living God" (E:15-16).

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⁶² FRIED, "Cyrus the Messiah? The Historical Background to Isaiah 45:1", 392.

⁶³ FRIED, "Cyrus the Messiah? The Historical Background to Isaiah 45:1", 393.

⁶⁴ In this way Hebrew Esther fits the view of KILEY – SHUTTLEWORTH (*Satire from Aesop to Buchwald*, i) that "satire, though it may not seem so on the surface, is actually conservative. ... It cherishes a sound society, good traditions, and wise viable institutions. ... Ridicule is the chief weapon of satire, but not the chief aim".

⁶⁵ BICKERMAN, *Four Strange Books of the Bible*, 228.

SUMMARY

The Old Greek version of Esther is an expansion and adaptation of the Hebrew version. The additions increase its length, provide references to God and to prayer, and explain aspects of the Hebrew story that are unclear. In this paper, I compare chaps. 1–3 and 8–10 of the two versions, excluding the additions, and show that the differences also amount to a change in genre between the two versions. The Hebrew version is a satire of the Persian government; the Old Greek version is a suspenseful novella of Esther's and Mordecai's roles saving the Jews from death.

„KEINER SOLL DIE LEKTÜRE DER SCHRIFT
DURCHEINANDERBRINGEN!“ EIN NEUES GRIECHISCHES
FRAGMENT AUS DEM JOHANNESKOMMENTAR
DES CYRILL VON ALEXANDRIEN

Der von Cyrill von Alexandrien († 444) verfasste Johanneskommentar (CPG 5208) stellt — neben den Johanneshomilien des Chrysostomus ¹ und dem teilweise erhaltenen Johanneskommentar des Origenes ² — die monumentalste antike Besprechung des vierten Evangeliums dar, die in griechischer Sprache auf uns gekommen ist. Das eine fortlaufende Exegese des johanneischen Textes bietende Werk umfasst insgesamt zwölf gewaltige Bücher: Die Bücher 1-6, die Erklärungen zu Joh 1,1 – 10,17 präsentieren, sowie die Bücher 9-12, die Erläuterungen zu Joh 12,49 – 21,25 enthalten, sind vollständig überliefert; die Bücher 7-8, die exegetische Ausführungen zu Joh 10,18 – 12,48 bieten, liegen lediglich in Fragmenten vor, die in etlichen Katenenhandschriften erhalten sind. Eine kritische Edition des Kommentars wurde im 19. Jahrhundert von Philipp E. Pusey besorgt ³, der den Text der in direkter Überlieferung vorliegenden Bücher 1-6 und 9-12 hauptsächlich aus drei Manuskripten — dem *Codex Barberinus Graecus* 504 (12. Jahrhundert), dem *Codex Vaticanus Graecus* 592 (15. Jahrhundert) und dem *Codex Vaticanus Graecus* 593 (15. Jahrhundert) — übernahm, während er die von ihm edierten Fragmente der Bücher 7-8 in den Katenenkommentaren der *Codices Parisinus Graecus* 187 (11. Jahrhundert), *Parisinus Graecus* 212 (13. Jahrhundert), *Parisinus Graecus supplementi* 159 (13. Jahrhundert), *Mosquensis* 41 (10. Jahrhundert), *Mosquensis* 93 (12. Jahrhundert), *Mosquensis* 119 (9. Jahrhundert), *Athous Dionysiou* 71 (9. Jahrhundert), *Bodleianus Barroccianus* 225 (12. Jahrhundert), *Oxoniensis aedis Christi Wakii* 2 (9. Jahrhundert) fand ⁴. Drei im *Codex Athous Laurensis* B 113 (11. Jahrhundert) erhaltene Exzerpte aus den Büchern 7-8, die in Puseys Ausgabe nicht berücksichtigt wurden, edierte im Jahre 1944 Joseph Reuss ⁵. Im Jahre 1966 konnte er den genannten Büchern 7-8 weitere

¹ Vgl. JOHANNES CHRYSOSTOMUS, *Hom. in Jo.*, PG 59, 23-482.

² Vgl. ORIGENES, *Comm. in Jo.*, Hg. E. PREUSCHEN, GCS 10 (Origenes IV; Leipzig 1903).

³ *Sancti Patris Nostri Cyrilli Archiepiscopi Alexandrini in D. Joannis Evangelium*, 3 Bde. (ed. P.E. PUSEY) (Oxford 1872, Nachdr. Brüssel 1965).

⁴ Vgl. PUSEY, *Cyrilli in D. Joannis Evangelium*, Bd. 1, VII-IX.

⁵ J. REUSS, „Cyrill von Alexandrien und sein Kommentar zum Johannes-Evangelium“, *Biblica* 25 (1944) 208-209.

achtzehn neue Textstücke zuordnen, die er im *Codex Vallicellianus* E 40 (10./11. Jahrhundert) entdeckte ⁶. Zwei im *Codex Parisinus Graecus* 1115 (13. Jahrhundert) erhaltene, bisher unbekannte Exzerpte aus dem Johanneskommentar des Cyrill von Alexandrien publizierte zuletzt Alexander Alexakis ⁷; auch wenn er die edierten Texte keinem der Bücher des Kommentars eindeutig zuordnete, kann angesichts der Tatsache, dass die Bücher 1-6 und 9-12 vollständig überliefert sind, kein Zweifel darüber bestehen, dass die Fragmente ursprünglich zu den Büchern 7-8 gehört haben müssen.

Im vorliegenden Beitrag soll nun dem wissenschaftlichen Publikum ein weiteres, bisher unbekanntes griechisches Textstück aus dem Kommentar Cyrills zum Johannesevangelium vorgelegt werden. Das Fragment, das ursprünglich — wie sich gleich zeigen wird — im verloren gegangenen 8. Buch der Schrift stand, ist im *Codex Athous Pantokratoros* 28 überliefert. Dieses aus dem 8. Jahrhundert stammende und auf seinen 270 Folien umfangreiche Katenenkommentare zu allen Paulusbriefen bietende Manuskript ist die älteste Pauluskatene, die wir besitzen ⁸. Das im vorliegenden Beitrag zu edierende Cyrill-Fragment wird vom Schreiber des *Codex* bemerkenswerterweise als Teil des von ihm entworfenen Katenenkommentars zum 2. Korintherbrief präsentiert. Da die überwiegende Mehrheit der vom Kompilator in diesem Teil seiner Katene zitierten exegetischen Aussagen auf die entsprechenden fortlaufenden patristischen Besprechungen des genannten Briefes des Paulus zurückgeht, stellt das Fragment, das nicht aus einem Kommentar zum 2. Korintherbrief, sondern aus einem Kommentar zum Johannesevangelium stammt, hier sicherlich eine Sondererscheinung dar. Die Antwort auf die Frage, warum der Schreiber des *Athoscodex* in seinem Kommentar zum 2. Korintherbrief einen Text aus

⁶ J. REUSS, *Johannes-Kommentare aus der griechischen Kirche* (TU 89; Berlin 1966) XXVI, 188-195.

⁷ Vgl. A. ALEXAKIS, *Codex Parisinus Graecus 1115 and Its Archetype* (Dumbarton Oaks Studies 34; Washington, DC 1996) 294 (Nr. 180 b / c).

⁸ Mehr zur Handschrift und ihrem Inhalt in: K. STAAB, *Die Pauluskatenen*. Nach den handschriftlichen Quellen untersucht (Scripta Pontificii Instituti Biblici; Rom 1926) 248-249, 254-259; S. LAMBROS, *Catalogue of the Greek Manuscripts of Mount Athos*, Bd. 1 (Cambridge 1895) 95 (Nr. 1062); K.F. ZAWADZKI, „Neue griechische Fragmente des Cyrill von Alexandrien, (Pseudo-)Athanasius, Philoxenos, Severus von Antiochien und Ammonios: patristische Auslegungen zum 1. Korintherbrief (ediert aus dem Codex Pantokratoros 28)“, *ZAC* 18 (2014) 260-282; K.F. ZAWADZKI, „Anonyme Scholien des Katenenkommentars zum 1. Korintherbrief im Codex Pantokratoros 28“, *Le Muséon* 129 (2016) 29-69. Eine ausführliche Diskussion zur Datierung des Manuskripts bietet K.F. ZAWADZKI, *Der Kommentar Cyrills von Alexandrien zum 2. Korintherbrief*. Einleitung, kritischer Text, Übersetzung, Einzelanalyse (Traditio Exegetica Graeca 18; Leuven), (im Druck).

einer Johannes-Besprechung bietet, ist wohl im Inhalt des Fragments zu suchen, das — wie dies gleich deutlich wird — eindeutig um das Wort des Paulus aus 2 Kor 5,19 kreist.

Die formale Struktur des vorliegenden Beitrages gestaltet sich wie folgt: In einem ersten Schritt soll der griechische Text des Fragments ediert und übersetzt werden. Da der Inhalt des Fragments interessenterweise auch in einigen syrischen Handschriften überliefert ist und damit in syrischer Übersetzung vorliegt, soll in einem zweiten Schritt die zuvor edierte griechische Fassung des Textes mit der erhaltenen syrischen Version jenes Textes eingehend philologisch verglichen werden; dieser philologische Vergleich wird hierbei sowohl die lexikalische als auch die syntaktische Ebene der Texte unter die Lupe nehmen, damit so ermittelt werden kann, wie sich die syrische Übersetzung und der im *Pantokrator*. 28 gebotene griechische Text genau zueinander verhalten und ob sich anhand der vergleichenden Analyse der Texte womöglich Spuren sprachlicher Bearbeitung des Originalwortlauts der Aussagen Cyrills durch den Katenisten bzw. durch den syrischen Übersetzer identifizieren lassen. In einem letzten dritten Schritt soll der edierte griechische Text einer exegetisch-theologischen Analyse unterzogen werden, die die Frage beantworten soll, wie Cyrill das Wort des Paulus aus 2 Kor 5,19 interpretiert.

I. DAS FRAGMENT

1. Edition

E codice Athous Pantokratoros 28, f. 102^v

Κυρίλλου, ἐκ τῆς ἐρμηνείας τοῦ κατὰ Ἰωάννην εὐαγγελίου·

- Μὴ γὰρ δὴ τις τῶν ἀμαθεστέρων ἐπελθεῖν εἰωθότων τῆς θεοπνεύστου
 γραφῆς συγγεῖτω τὴν ἀνάγνωσιν θεὸν εἶναι νομίζων ἐν Χριστῷ, μὴ δὲ
 τοῦτο λέγειν οἰέσθω τὸν πνευματοφόρον. οὐ γὰρ ἀκριβῶς λίαν ὁ λόγος.
 5 αὐτὸς γὰρ φύσει θεὸς ἦν ὁ Χριστός, οὐκ ἄνθρωπος θεοφόρος καθ’
 ἓνα τῶν προφητῶν. καὶ δι’ αὐτοῦ κατηλλάγημεν τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρί, τὴν
 ἀρχαίαν λύσαντες ἐχθραν τὴν διὰ τῆς ἁμαρτίας φημί καὶ τοῦ λατρεῦειν
 τῇ κτίσει παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα. τῆς γὰρ μὴν καταλλαγῆς ὁ τρόπος ἡ δικαιο-
 10 οῦσα πίστις, ἣν εἰς ἑαυτὸν δεχόμενος ὁ Χριστός, ἀνατίθησι δὴ πάντως
 καὶ αὐτῷ τῷ πατρί. μία γὰρ ἐν ἀμφοῖν ἡ θεότης καὶ ἀδιάκριτον τῆς
 οὐσίας τὸ ἀξίωμα.

9 ἦν scripsi: ἦν Cod. Pantokrator. 28

2. Übersetzung

Von Cyrill, aus dem Kommentar zum Johannesevangelium:

Denn keiner von den Törichtern, die [andere] anzugreifen pflegen, soll die Lektüre der göttlich inspirierten Schrift durcheinanderbringen und glauben, dass Gott in Christus sei; er soll nicht behaupten, dass der vom Geist erfüllte [Autor] dies sage. Denn der Sinn des Textes ist [an dieser Stelle] nicht ganz eindeutig. Denn Christus war der Natur nach selbst Gott, er war kein Mensch, der — wie einer der Propheten — Gott in sich trug. Und durch ihn [= Christus] sind wir mit Gott dem Vater versöhnt worden, indem wir die alte Feindschaft überwunden haben; ich meine die Feindschaft, die das Ergebnis der Sünde und das Ergebnis dessen war, dass wir lieber der Schöpfung als dem Schöpfer huldigten. Der Weg der Versöhnung [mit Gott] aber [ist] der gerecht machende Glaube. Wenn Christus diesen [unseren] Glauben an sich selbst bekommt, schenkt er ihn [gleichzeitig] ganz auch seinem eigenen Vater. Denn es gibt in den beiden *eine* Göttlichkeit und die ununterscheidbare Würde des Wesens.

II. DIE SYRISCHE ÜBERLIEFERUNG DES FRAGMENTS

Der Inhalt des oben edierten griechischen Fragments, das bis heute als verloren gegangen galt, war bisher lediglich in syrischer Übersetzung zugänglich. Den in drei Florilegienhandschriften — in den *Codices British Library Add.* 12155 (8. Jhd.), 14532 (8. Jhd.) und 14533 (8./9. Jhd.)⁹ — überlieferten Text jener Übersetzung, die allerdings nur dem ersten Teil des oben präsentierten griechischen Fragments entspricht, hat bereits Pusey ediert. Ein knapper syrischer Abschnitt, der sich nach näherem Hinsehen als Übersetzung der letzten Sätze des hier edierten griechischen Textes erweist und im das Werk des Severus von Antiochien *Contra impium grammaticum* überliefernden *Codex British Library Add.* 12157 (7./8. Jhd.) erhalten ist, ist zum ersten Mal ebenso von Pusey präsentiert worden. Eine syrische Übersetzung, die sich — bis auf den Ausdruck *καὶ ἀδιάκριτον τῆς οὐσίας τὸ ἄξιωμα* — inhaltlich mit dem gesamten edierten griechischen Text deckt, wird vom antiochenischen Patriarchen Petrus von Callinicus († 591) im 37. Buch seines — von Rifaat Y. Ebied, Albert van Roey und Lionel R. Wickham neuerdings edierten — Werkes *Contra Damianum* geboten; der uns zugängliche Text dieser Übersetzung stützt sich auf zwei Handschriften: den *Codex British Library Add.* 7191 (7. Jhd.)

⁹ Mehr zu den genannten syrischen Handschriften in: K.F. ZAWADZKI, „Syrische Fragmente des Kommentars Cyrills von Alexandrien zum 1. Korintherbrief“, *ZAC* 21 (2017) 308-311.

Übersetzung ¹¹:

Er [= Cyrill] hat im achten Buch des Kommentars zum Johannesevangelium Folgendes geschrieben, indem er Folgendes gesagt hat:

Denn [dafür], dass die Ehre der Zugehörigkeit zu Gott durch Christus denjenigen zuteilwird, die glauben, kämpft stellvertretend für uns auch der göttliche Paulus, der so schreibt: „Gott war derjenige, der in Christus die Welt mit sich versöhnte“ (2 Kor 5,19). Denn keiner von denen, die gewohnt sind, die von Gott inspirierte Schrift auf unvernünftige Weise zu verstehen, soll die Lektüre [dieser Schrift] durcheinanderbringen, indem er behauptet, dass Gott in Christus sei. Und er soll nicht behaupten, dass der mit dem Geist bekleidete [Autor] dies sage. Denn der Sinn des Textes ist [an dieser Stelle] nicht ganz eindeutig. Denn Christus ist der Natur nach selbst Gott und er ist kein Mensch, der — wie einer der Propheten — mit Gott bekleidet ist. Und durch ihn [= Christus] sind wir mit Gott dem Vater versöhnt worden, indem er die alte Feindschaft beseitigt hat; ich meine die Feindschaft, die durch die Sünde und durch die Verehrung der Schöpfung anstelle des Schöpfers [entstand]. Der Weg der Versöhnung [ist] der gerecht machende Glaube. Wenn der Sohn diesen [unseren] Glauben an sich selbst bekommt, lässt er ihn [gleichzeitig] ganz auch zum Vater selbst emporsteigen. Denn es gibt *eine* Gottheit in den beiden.

Ein Blick auf die syrischen Übersetzungen lässt sofort erkennen, dass der von Pusey edierte erste Abschnitt und der von Petrus von Callinicus gebotene Text — freilich bis auf die offensichtliche Tatsache, dass der Text bei Pusey ein wenig kürzer ist als der Text bei Petrus von Callinicus — völlig identisch sind, sodass man hier durchaus von *einem* Text sprechen darf. Die Vermutung, dass die Texte auf die gleiche Quelle, d.h. auf den gleichen Übersetzer zurückgehen, liegt nahe. Der von Pusey präsentierte zweite Text hingegen unterscheidet sich in lexikalischer Hinsicht eindeutig vom entsprechenden Abschnitt des Textes des Petrus von Callinicus und geht sogar am Ende — mit der Formulierung „und die ununterscheidbare Würde des Wesens“ — inhaltlich über das bei Petrus überlieferte Material ein wenig hinaus; dass die Texte hier auf zwei unterschiedliche Übersetzer zurückgehen, scheint sicher. Beachtenswert ist darüber hinaus, dass alle syrischen Texte gleichermaßen mit dem recht eindeutigen Hinweis darauf eingeleitet werden, dass die hier zitierten Äußerungen Cyrills aus dem 8. Buch seines Johanneskommentars stammen. Eine solche genaue Quellenangabe fehlt im *Pantokrator*. 28, der lediglich darüber informiert, dass der kopierte Text Cyrills seinem Kommentar zum Johannesevangelium entnommen wurde; in welchem Buch jenes Kommentars die präsentierten Aussagen des alexandrinischen Bischofs standen, wird vom Schreiber des

¹¹ Eine englische Übersetzung des syrischen Textes bieten EBIED, VAN ROEY, WICKHAM, *Petri Callinicensis tractatus contra Damianum*, 64⁷⁶⁻⁸⁹.

Athoscodex nicht mitgeteilt. Damit bieten die syrischen Texte als einzige uns zugängliche Quelle den klaren Beleg dafür, dass das edierte griechische Fragment zum 8. Buch des cyrillianischen Kommentars gehörte. Die Frage nun, inwiefern der griechische und syrische Text in philologischer Hinsicht einander entsprechen, soll das nächste Kapitel erörtern.

2. *Vergleichende philologische Analyse des griechischen und syrischen Textes*

Bereits bei einem flüchtigen Vergleich des oben edierten griechischen Fragments mit den erhaltenen syrischen Übersetzungen fällt auf, dass der erste Satz des syrischen Textes bei Pusey (Text I) und bei Petrus von Callinicus, in dem das Wort des Paulus aus 2 Kor 5,19 zitiert wird, in der griechischen Fassung fehlt. Der Satz ist damit für uns nach wie vor nur in der syrischen Überlieferung greifbar. Die Tatsache, dass die syrische Übersetzung hier zu Beginn mehr Text bietet als das edierte griechische Fragment, stellt ein eindeutiges Indiz dafür dar, dass die griechische Vorlage des syrischen Übersetzers hier keinesfalls der griechische Text des *Pantokrator*. 28 gewesen sein kann. Textkritisch steht damit jene Vorlage — auch wenn sie anhand der syrischen Übersetzung nur erahnt werden kann — sicherlich in keinem direkten Abhängigkeitsverhältnis zum *Athoscodex*. Der hier erhaltene syrische Text darf demzufolge — zumindest im gewissen Sinne — als unabhängiger Parallelzeuge der im edierten griechischen Fragment zitierten Aussagen Cyrills betrachtet werden.

Die folgenden Ausführungen, in denen ein detaillierter philologischer Vergleich zwischen dem griechischen und syrischen Text geboten wird, berücksichtigen verständlicherweise ausschließlich diese Teile der Texte, die gemeinsame inhaltliche Berührungspunkte aufweisen. Die oben genannte Anfangspassage, die nur in syrischer Sprache vorliegt, wird somit hier außer Acht gelassen.

a) Lexikalische Ebene

In lexikalischer Hinsicht weisen das edierte griechische Fragment und die syrische Übersetzung weitgehende Berührungspunkte auf: Die vom Übersetzer verwendeten Begriffe lassen in den allermeisten Fällen problemlos ihre Äquivalente im überlieferten griechischen Text finden; nur vereinzelt tauchen in den Texten Ausdrücke auf, die sich nicht ohne Weiteres zueinander zuordnen lassen. Das folgende griechisch-syrische und syrisch-griechische Glossar soll diese Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede zwischen den beiden Fassungen der cyrillianischen Aussagen genauestens dokumentieren.

griechisch-syrisches Glossar

ἀδιάκριτος = ܐܕܝܐܟܪܝܬܐ ܐܠ	θεόπνευστος = ܐܠܗܐ ܕܥܡܡܐ
ἀκριβής = ܕܕܝܠܐ	θεός = ܐܠܐܗܐ
ἀμαθής (töricht, ungelehrt) ≈ ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ (unvernünftig, auf unvernünftige Weise)	θεότης = ܐܠܗܐܬܐ
ἀμαρτία = ܐܡܐܪܬܐ	θεοφόρος = ܐܠܐܗܐ ܕܥܡܡܐ
ἀνάγνωσις = ܐܢܐܓܨܐ	καί = -ܐ
ἀνατίθημι = ܐܢܐܬܝܬܐ (Petrus v. Callinicus) / ܐܢܐܬܝܬܐ (Text II bei Pusey)	κατά = ܕܡܡܐ
ἄνθρωπος = ܐܢܫܐ	καταλλαγή (Versöhnung) = ܐܠܗܐܬܐ (Petrus v. Callinicus) / ≈ ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ (Austausch; Text II bei Pusey)
ἄξιωμα = ܐܕܝܐܡܐ	καταλλάττω = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ
ἀρχαῖος = ܐܪܚܐܝܐ	κτίσις = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ
αὐτός = ܐܘܬܐ	λατρεύω = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ
γάρ = ܕܡܡܐ	λίαν = ܕܡܡܐ
γέ μὴν = ܕܡܡܐ (Petrus v. Callinicus) / ܕܡܡܐ (Text II bei Pusey)	λέγω = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ
γραφή = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ	λόγος = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ
δέ = -ܐ	λύω = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ
δέχομαι = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ (Petrus v. Callinicus) / ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ (Text II bei Pusey)	μή = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ
δῆ = eben, schon (keine Entsprechung im syr. Text)	νομίζω = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ
διά = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ	οἶμαι = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ
δι' αὐτοῦ = ܕܡܡܐܬܐ	ὁ κτίσας = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ
ἐθω = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ	οὐ, οὐκ = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ
εἶμι = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ (+ Suffixe)	οὐσία = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ
εἶς = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ	πάντως (ganz) = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ (Petrus v. Callinicus) / ≈ ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ (in der Tat; Text II bei Pusey)
εἰς ἑαυτόν = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ (Petrus v. Callinicus) / ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ (Text II bei Pusey)	παρά = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ
ἐν = -ܐ	πατήρ = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ
ἐν ἑαυτοῖν = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ	πνευματοφόρος = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ
ἐπέρχομαι (herankommen, angreifen) ≠ ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ (hören, verstehen)	προφήτης = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ
ἐχθρα = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ	συγγέω = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ
ἡ δικαιοῦσα πίστις = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ	τις = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ
ἦν (Akk. fem. von ὅς) = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ	τοῦτο = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ
	τρόπος = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ (Petrus v. Callinicus) / ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ (Text II bei Pusey)
	φημί = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ
	φύσις = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ
	Χριστός = ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ
	Χριστός (Christus) ≈ ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ (Sohn)

syrisch-griechisches Glossar

ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ = πατήρ	ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ = ἄξιωμα
ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ = οὐσία	ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ (+ Suffixe) = εἶμι
ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ = κατά	ܐܠܐܡܐܬܐ = θεός

ܠܗܘܬܐ = θεότης
 ܝܬܐ = λέγω, φημί
 ܡܐ = τις
 -ܐ = ἐν
 ܡܘܬܐܢܐ = δι' αὐτοῦ
 ܡܐ = διά
 ܥܐ = συγγέω
 ܠܗܘܬܐܥܐ = ἔχθρα
 ܠܝܐ (Sohn) ≈ Χριστός (Christus)
 ܠܘܝܐ = ὁ κτίσας
 ܠܗܝܐ = κτίσις
 ܠܡܝܐ = ἄνθρωπος
 ܥܡܐܝܬܐ = ἐν ἀμφοῖν
 ܝܬܐ = γάρ
 ܠܝܐ (Petrus v. Callinicus) = γὰρ μήν =
 ܥܥܬܐ (Text II bei Pusey)
 ܠܝܬܐ = τοῦτο
 ܐܬܐ = αὐτός
 ܠܡܝܬܐܝܐ ܠܗܘܬܐܡܐ = ἡ δικαιοῦσα
 πίστις
 ܥܥܬܐ (Text II bei Pusey) = γὰρ μήν =
 ܠܝܐ (Petrus v. Callinicus)
 -ܐ = δέ / καί
 ܠܝܐ (Petrus v. Callinicus) = τρόπος =
 ܠܡܥܐܠܐ (Text II bei Pusey)
 ܡܐ = εἶς
 ܠܥܐܠܐ (Austausch; Text II bei Pusey)
 ≈ καταλλαγὴ (Versöhnung) =
 ܠܗܘܬܐܝܬܐ (Petrus v. Callinicus)
 ܠܗܡܥܐܠܐ = ἁμαρτία
 ܗܘܬܐ = ἀκριβής
 ܠܡܥܐܠܐ (Text II bei Pusey) = τρόπος
 = ܠܝܐ (Petrus v. Callinicus)
 ܠܡܐ = φύσις
 ܠܗܘܬܐ = γραφή
 ܠܐ = μή, οὐ, οὐκ
 ܠܡܥܐܠܐܬܐ ܠܐ = ἀδιάκριτος
 ܗܘܬܐܠܐ ܠܐ (unvernünftig, auf
 unvernünftige Weise) ≈ ἀμαθής
 (töricht, ungelehrt)
 ܠܡܐܠܐ ܡܐܠܐ = θεοφόρος

ܠܡܝܬܐܝܐ ܡܐܠܐ = πνευματοφόρος
 ܠܝܐ ܝܬܐ = παρά
 ܡܝܬܐ = ἦν (Akk. fem. von ὅς)
 ܠܐ = οὐ
 ܠܗܘܬܐ = λόγος
 ܡܝܬܐܠܐ ܠܝܐ (Petrus v. Callinicus) =
 πάντως (ganz) ≈ ܗܘܬܐܝܬܐ (in der
 Tat; Text II bei Pusey)
 ܠܡܥܐܠܐ = Χριστός
 ܠܡܐ = προφήτης
 ܠܡܐܠܐ ܠܝܐ ܡܥܐܠܐ = θεόπνευστος
 ܡܥܐܠܐ (Petrus v. Callinicus) = δέχομαι
 = ܡܐܠܐ (Text II bei Pusey)
 ܝܬܐ = νομίζω, οἶμαι
 ܡܥܐܠܐ = λῖαν
 ܡܥܐܠܐ (Petrus v. Callinicus) = ἀνατί-
 θημι = ܝܬܐ (Text II bei Pusey)
 ܡܥܐܠܐ = ἔθω
 ܡܥܐܠܐ (Petrus v. Callinicus) = εἰς
 ἑαυτὸν = ܡܥܐܠܐ (Text II
 bei Pusey)
 ܠܡܥܐܠܐ = ἀρχαῖος
 ܡܥܐܠܐ = λατρεύω
 ܡܥܐܠܐ (Petrus v. Callinicus) = εἰς
 ἑαυτὸν = ܡܥܐܠܐ (Petrus v. Calli-
 nicus)
 ܡܐܠܐ (Text II bei Pusey) = δέχομαι =
 ܡܥܐܠܐ (Petrus v. Callinicus)
 ܝܬܐ (Text II bei Pusey) = ἀνατίθημι
 = ܡܥܐܠܐ (Petrus v. Callinicus)
 ܠܡܝܬܐ = ἀνάγνωσις
 ܠܝܐ = καταλλάττω
 ܡܥܐܠܐ (hören, verstehen) ≠ ἐπέρχο-
 μαι (herankommen, angreifen)
 ܠܝܐ = λύω
 ܗܘܬܐܝܬܐ (in der Tat; Text II bei Pusey)
 ≈ πάντως (ganz) = ܡܥܐܠܐ ܠܝܐ
 (Petrus v. Callinicus)
 ܠܗܘܬܐܝܬܐ (Petrus v. Callinicus) =
 καταλλαγὴ (Versöhnung) ≈ ܠܥܐܠܐ
 (Austausch; Text II bei Pusey)

Die gebotenen Glossare machen deutlich, dass der im *Pantokrator*. 28 zu Beginn des Textes überlieferte griechische Infinitiv ἐπελθεῖν (= herankommen, angreifen) in der syrischen Übersetzung mit dem

der Bedeutung jenes Infinitivs nicht entsprechenden Ausdruck ܐܬܠܝܬܐ (= hören, verstehen) wiedergegeben wird. Der neben ἐπελθεῖν stehende adjektivische Komparativ τῶν ἀμαθεστέρων (= von den Törichten) wird vom syrischen Schreiber mit dem nicht ganz dem Text des *Pantokrator*. 28 folgenden Adverb ܕܠܥܠܐ ܕܠܐ (= auf unvernünftige Weise) übersetzt. All dies lässt die Vermutung anstellen, dass die griechische Vorlage des syrischen Textes an dieser Stelle nicht — wie dies im Athos-codex der Fall ist — μὴ [...] τις τῶν ἀμαθεστέρων ἐπελθεῖν εἰωθότων, sondern höchstwahrscheinlich μὴ [...] τις τῶν ἀμαθῶς ἀκούειν εἰωθότων lautete. Da die im *Pantokrator*. 28 überlieferten ἐπελθεῖν und τῶν ἀμαθεστέρων im Vergleich mit den anhand der syrischen Übersetzung rekonstruierten ἀκούειν und ἀμαθῶς sicherlich eine *lectio difficilior* darstellen, kann davon ausgegangen werden, dass der erhaltene griechische Text hier den Originalwortlaut der Aussage Cyrills bietet, während der syrische Text einer lexikalisch vereinfachten Version jener Aussage folgt.

Ein weiterer lexikalischer Aspekt, der die Texte ein wenig voneinander unterscheidet, betrifft den gegen Ende des griechischen Textes vorkommenden Begriff Χριστός. Im syrischen Text — sowohl bei Petrus von Callinicus als auch bei Severus von Antiochien (Text II bei Pusey) — begegnet hier der Ausdruck ܕܡܝܬܐ (= Sohn), der vermuten lässt, dass die griechische Vorlage des syrischen Übersetzers an dieser Stelle das Wort υἱός enthielt. Zweifelsfrei ist υἱός richtiger bzw. ursprünglicher als Χριστός, zumal Cyrill hier vom πατήρ spricht und so davon ausgehen lässt, dass υἱός terminologisch besser als Χριστός zum πατήρ passt.

Auffallend ist, dass der im letzten Teil des edierten griechischen Fragments begegnende Terminus καταλλαγή bei Petrus von Callinicus mit dem syrischen Ausdruck ܕܡܝܬܐܐܝܬܐ (= Versöhnung) übersetzt wird, während der Text des Severus von Antiochien (Text II bei Pusey) an dieser Stelle die Formulierung ܕܡܝܬܐܐܝܬܐ (= Austausch / Umwandlung) bietet. Der letztgenannte syrische Begriff ist einerseits zwar lexikalisch korrekt, erscheint aber andererseits unglücklich: Der griechische Ausdruck καταλλαγή bedeutet nämlich zunächst tatsächlich „Austausch“, wird aber im vorliegenden Text eindeutig im Sinne von „Ausgleich“ / „Versöhnung“ verwendet. Das bei Petrus von Callinicus überlieferte syrische ܕܡܝܬܐܐܝܬܐ entspricht demnach hier genauer der eigentlichen Bedeutung des griechischen Terminus, während ܕܡܝܬܐܐܝܬܐ an dieser Stelle im Grunde nach dem Sinn des Textes fragen lässt¹². Der syrische Schreiber

¹² Denn was bedeutet eigentlich die Feststellung, dass „das Mittel des Austausches der gerecht machende Glaube“ (ܕܡܝܬܐܐܝܬܐ ܕܡܝܬܐܐܝܬܐ ܕܡܝܬܐܐܝܬܐ ܕܡܝܬܐܐܝܬܐ) sei? Welcher Austausch soll hier gemeint sein?

Anmerkungen:

Ein kleiner syntaktischer Unterschied, der die beiden Texte hier ein wenig voneinander abweichen lässt, betrifft den griechischen Genetiv τῆς θεοπνεύστου γραφῆς, der in der syrischen Übersetzung mit dem Akkusativ ܐܡܪ ܐܠܗܐܝܬܐ wiedergegeben wird; während sich der Ausdruck τῆς θεοπνεύστου γραφῆς im griechischen Text auf die Formulierung τὴν ἀνάγνωσιν bezieht und in diesem Zusammenhang als *genetivus obiectivus* fungiert, hängt die syrische Wendung ܐܡܪ ܐܠܗܐܝܬܐ ܐܡܪܐܝܬܐ syntaktisch vom Infinitiv ܐܠܗܐܝܬܐ (= hören, verstehen), mit dem — wie dies bereits notiert wurde — der griechische Infinitiv ἐπελθεῖν (= herankommen, angreifen) übersetzt wird.

Weitere syntaktische Unterschiede lassen sich hier nicht feststellen: Der griechische *genetivus partitivus* τῶν [...] εἰωθότων wird im syrischen Text korrekt mit dem präpositionalen Ausdruck ܐܠܗܐܝܬܐ ܕܐܠܗܐܝܬܐ umschrieben; die Imperative συγγείτω und οἰέσθω werden richtigerweise mit den syrischen Imperfektformen ܐܠܗܐܝܬܐ und ܐܠܗܐܝܬܐ wiedergegeben; die ACI-Konstruktionen θεὸν εἶναι ἐν Χριστῷ und τοῦτο λέγειν τὸν πνευματοφόρον werden vom syrischen Übersetzer erwartungsgemäß mit den -ܐ-Sätzen ܐܠܗܐܝܬܐ ܕܐܠܗܐܝܬܐ und ܐܠܗܐܝܬܐ ܕܐܠܗܐܝܬܐ zum Ausdruck gebracht; das Partizip νομίζων wird im syrischen Text korrekterweise mit dem temporalen ܐܠܗܐܝܬܐ-Satz ܐܠܗܐܝܬܐ ܐܠܗܐܝܬܐ umschrieben. Alles in allem präsentieren sich die beiden Texte — bis auf den angesprochenen Genetiv τῆς θεοπνεύστου γραφῆς — in syntaktischer Hinsicht deckungsgleich.

Satz 2:

Οὐ γὰρ ἀκριβῶς λίαν ὁ λόγος.

ܐܠܗܐܝܬܐ ܐܠܗܐܝܬܐ ܐܠܗܐܝܬܐ / ܐܠܗܐܝܬܐ
(Text I bei Pusey / Petrus v. Callinicus)

Anmerkungen:

In syntaktischer Hinsicht sind diese beiden prädikatslosen Sätze fast identisch; auch die Reihenfolge der einzelnen Wörter ist hier nahezu gleich. Die Tatsache, dass das griechische Adverb ἀκριβῶς im syrischen Text mit dem Adjektiv ܐܠܗܐܝܬܐ und nicht etwa mit dem Adverb ܐܠܗܐܝܬܐ wiedergegeben wird, ist sicherlich nicht damit zu erklären, dass in der griechischen Vorlage des syrischen Übersetzers das Adjektiv ἀκριβής stand, sondern offenbar damit, dass eine wörtliche Übertragung von ἀκριβῶς den syrischen Text an dieser Stelle nicht ganz verständlich gemacht hätte. Dass der Übersetzer mit seinem ܐܠܗܐܝܬܐ die Syntax des griechischen Textes

Anmerkungen:

Es fällt hier auf, dass das als *participium coniunctum* fungierende und vom Prädikat κατηλλάγημεν abhängige Partizip Plural λύσαντες (= indem wir überwunden / aufgelöst haben) in der syrischen Übersetzung mit der in der dritten Person Singular formulierten Wendung ܠܝܬܐ ܠܐܢܐ (= indem er überwunden / aufgelöst hat) wiedergegeben wird. Diese kleine syntaktische Diskrepanz zwischen dem griechischen und syrischen Text ist wohl dadurch bedingt, dass die griechische Vorlage des syrischen Schreibers an der Stelle des im *Pantokrator*. 28 überlieferten λύσαντες höchstwahrscheinlich entweder die auf das δι' αὐτοῦ bezogene Form λύσαντος (δι' αὐτοῦ κατηλλάγημεν τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ, τὴν ἀρχαίαν λύσαντος ἔχθραν = wir sind durch ihn, der die alte Feindschaft aufgelöst hatte, mit Gott dem Vater versöhnt worden) oder den das τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ ergänzenden Dativ λύσαντι (δι' αὐτοῦ κατηλλάγημεν τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ, τὴν ἀρχαίαν λύσαντι ἔχθραν = wir sind durch ihn mit Gott dem Vater versöhnt worden, der die alte Feindschaft aufgelöst hatte) enthielt. Inhaltlich scheint sowohl das anhand des syrischen Textes rekonstruierte λύσαντος bzw. λύσαντι als auch das überlieferte λύσαντες durchaus möglich: Im ersten Fall ist Christus bzw. Gott derjenige, der die Feindschaft zwischen ihm und dem Menschen beendet; im zweiten Fall sind „wir“ diejenigen, die durch den versöhnenden Dienst Christi dazu befähigt werden, jene Feindschaft zu beenden.

Weitere syntaktische Differenzen zwischen den Texten lassen sich hier nicht erkennen; die syrische Übersetzung folgt ganz und gar den syntaktischen Strukturen des griechischen Textes: So wird das griechische Perfekt κατηλλάγημεν korrekterweise mit dem syrischen Perfekt Ethpaal ܠܝܬܐ ܠܐܢܐ zum Ausdruck gebracht; die Dative τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ und τῇ κτίσει werden erwartungsgemäß mithilfe der mit der Präposition -Δ konstruierten Formulierungen ܠܐܢܐ ܠܐܢܐ und ܠܐܢܐ ܠܐܢܐ wiedergegeben; der Ausdruck τὴν διὰ τῆς ἁμαρτίας φημί findet sein direktes Äquivalent in der Wendung ܠܐܢܐ ܠܐܢܐ ܠܐܢܐ ܠܐܢܐ; der Infinitiv διὰ τοῦ λατρεύειν (= durch das Huldigen) wird durchaus geschickt mit der unpersönlichen Formulierung im Imperfekt ܠܐܢܐ ܠܐܢܐ ܠܐܢܐ (= dadurch, dass man huldigen wollte) umschrieben; der präpositionalen Wendung παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα entspricht schließlich syntaktisch der Ausdruck ܠܐܢܐ ܠܐܢܐ.

Satz 5:

Τῆς γὰρ μὴν καταλλαγῆς ὁ τρόπος ἡ δικαιοῦσα πίστις, ἣν εἰς ἑαυτὸν δεχόμενος ὁ Χριστός, ἀνατίθησι δὴ πάντως καὶ αὐτῷ τῷ πατρὶ.

ܐܘܬܪܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ
ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ
(Petrus v. Callinicus)

ܐܘܬܪܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ
ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ
(Text II bei Pusey)

Anmerkungen:

In syntaktischer Hinsicht sind die Texte absolut identisch und weisen keine Auffälligkeiten auf. So findet etwa der griechische Genetiv τῆς καταλλαγῆς sein syntaktisches Äquivalent im syrischen ܡܪܝܢܐ bzw. ܡܪܝܢܐ; dem Partizip δεχόμενος entspricht der Temporalsatz ܐܘܬܪܐ bzw. ܐܘܬܪܐ; das griechische Präsens ἀνατίθησι wird korrekt mit dem Partizip ܡܡܝܬܐ bzw. ܡܡܝܬܐ wiedergegeben. Dass der vorliegende, im *Pantokrator*. 28 überlieferte griechische Satz von den syrischen Übersetzern in derselben Form auch in ihren griechischen Vorlagen vorgefunden worden sein wird, scheint sicher.

Satz 6:

Μία γὰρ ἐν ἀμφοῖν ἡ θεότης καὶ ἀδιάκριτον τῆς οὐσίας τὸ ἀξίωμα.

ܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ
(Petrus v. Callinicus)

ܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ
(Text II bei Pusey)

Anmerkungen:

Auffallend ist, dass der griechische Satz sowie die von Pusey edierte syrische Übersetzung gleichermaßen kein Prädikat haben, während der Text des Petrus von Callinicus als Prädikat das syrische ܡܡܝܬܐ (= sie ist / sie gibt es) bietet. Die Vermutung, dass die hier im *Pantokrator*. 28 überlieferte und im Puseyischen Text bestätigte prädikatslose Formulierung den Originalwortlaut der Aussage Cyrills wiedergibt, liegt nahe.

Ansonsten weisen sowohl der griechische Text als auch die beiden syrischen Übersetzungen die gleiche syntaktische Struktur auf. Syntaktische Abweichungen der Fassungen voneinander lassen sich nicht feststellen.

Zusammenfassend kann konstatiert werden, dass die oben aufgezeigten und besprochenen syntaktischen Unterschiede zwischen dem überlieferten griechischen Text und den syrischen Übersetzungen minimal und inhaltlich im Grunde völlig unbedeutend sind. Dass die griechischen

Vorlagen der syrischen Schreiber die gleiche syntaktische Struktur gehabt haben müssen, die auch der hier edierte Text des *Pantokrator*. 28 hat, steht somit außer Frage. Die syrische Überlieferung bestätigt damit mit voller Evidenz den im *Athoscodex* erhaltenen Wortlaut der Aussage Cyrills und lässt so mit ziemlicher Sicherheit davon ausgehen, dass jener Wortlaut tatsächlich direkt aus der Feder des alexandrinischen Patriarchen stammt und somit keine bearbeitenden Eingriffe seitens des Katenisten erfuhr.

III. EXEGETISCH-THEOLOGISCHE ANALYSE DES FRAGMENTS

Inhaltlich kreist das griechische Fragment — wie dies etwa nicht zuletzt der in der griechischen Überlieferung nicht erhaltene erste Satz des oben präsentierten Textes des Petrus von Callinicus deutlich macht — um das Wort des Paulus aus 2 Kor 5,19: θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσων ἑαυτῷ (= *wörtlich*: Gott war in Christus die Welt mit sich versöhnend). Cyrill beschäftigt hier die Frage, wie der paulinische Ausdruck θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ richtig zu verstehen ist: War Gott tatsächlich in Christus? Ist Christus daher seiner Natur nach kein Gott, sondern ein Mensch, der — wie ein Prophet — Gott lediglich in sich trägt? Will der Apostel die Gottheit des Menschen Christus bestreiten? All diese Fragen erscheinen insofern berechtigt, als die Syntax der paulinischen Äußerung auf den ersten Blick nicht ganz eindeutig ist. Problematisch ist hier die syntaktische Funktion des vom Apostel gebrauchten Partizips καταλλάσσων (= versöhnend). Grammatisch betrachtet, gibt es drei Möglichkeiten, jene Funktion zu bestimmen. Die erste von ihnen geht davon aus, dass καταλλάσσων ein temporales *participium coniunctum* ist. In diesem Fall müsste der besprochene Satz wie folgt übersetzt werden: „Gott war in Christus, als er [= Gott] die Welt mit sich versöhnte“. Die Formulierung θεὸς ἦν wird hier auf ἐν Χριστῷ bezogen, während das Partizip καταλλάσσων eine selbständige Nebenhandlung des θεός zum Ausdruck bringt. Die zweite Möglichkeit, die syntaktische Rolle des problematischen Partizips zu erklären, lässt καταλλάσσων als *participium praedicativum* fungieren. In diesem Fall würde die Übersetzung des analysierten Satzes des Paulus lauten: „Gott war derjenige, der in Christus die Welt mit sich versöhnte“. Das Partizip καταλλάσσων übernimmt hier die Funktion eines Prädikatsnomens und beantwortet die Frage, wer bzw. wie θεὸς ἦν. Die dritte Möglichkeit, das genannte Partizip syntaktisch aufzufassen, verknüpft καταλλάσσων direkt mit ἦν und lässt die beiden Ausdrücke zu einer Periphrase werden, die in ihrer Bedeutung dem Indikativ Imperfekt

sehr nahekommt. In diesem Fall sollte der Satz des Paulus folgendermaßen ins Deutsche übertragen werden: „Gott versöhnte in Christus die Welt mit sich“. Da die beiden letztgenannten Möglichkeiten der Definierung der syntaktischen Rolle des καταλλάσσων inhaltlich auf derselben Linie liegen, kann die hier besprochene Äußerung des Apostels im Grunde auf zweifache Weise interpretiert werden: 1) Gott war in Christus, als er die Welt mit sich versöhnte; 2) Gott versöhnte in Christus die Welt mit sich.

Dass der analysierte Satz des Paulus wegen der nicht eindeutigen syntaktischen Funktion des καταλλάσσων zu theologisch-christologischen Missverständnissen führen kann und deshalb besonders einer klärenden Auslegung bedarf, wird bereits von mehreren altkirchlichen Autoren erkannt. So plädiert etwa Severian von Gabala dafür, καταλλάσσων als Teil einer mit ἦν gebildeten Periphrase zu verstehen, und schreibt in seinem Kommentar zum 2. Korintherbrief folgendes: οὕτως νοητέον· ὅτι θεὸς ἦν κόσμον ἑαυτῷ καταλλάσσων ἐν Χριστῷ (= so soll [der Satz] verstanden werden: Gott versöhnte in Christus die Welt mit sich)¹⁴. Severus von Antiochien wiederum vertritt die Meinung, dass καταλλάσσων im Sinne eines *participium praedicativum* zu erklären sei, und äußert sich in einem seiner Briefe wie folgt:

“Ὁν τρόπον οὖν αὐτός ἐστι ἐν τῷ πατρί, τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ ὁ πατὴρ εἶναι πιστεύεται. οὕτως οὖν καὶ τὸ ὁ θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσων ἑαυτῷ νοηθήσεται. πλὴν ἐνταῦθα καὶ διαστεῖλαι χρὴ τὸ ῥητὸν καὶ ὑποστίξαι συνετῶς καὶ μὴ ἀμαθῶς συνάψαι καὶ οὕτως ἀναγνῶναι καλῶς ὅτι θεὸς ἦν καὶ στήσαι τὸν λόγον καὶ ἀνακόψαι καὶ οὕτως ἐπαγαγεῖν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσων ἑαυτῷ. τοῖς γὰρ εὐσεβέσιν ἀποστολικῶς καὶ εὐσεβῶς πᾶν νόημα καὶ ἀνάγνωσμα αἰχμαλωτίζεται εἰς Χριστόν. τοῖς δὲ ἀσεβέσι πᾶν τουναντίον. καὶ γὰρ ἀσυνέτως τὰ μὲν συνάπτουσιν, τὰ δὲ διαιροῦσιν, τὰ δὲ προστιθέασιν, τὰ δὲ ἀφαιροῦσιν, ἵνα τὸ σφίσι δοκοῦν λέγειν δόξειε τὰ θεόπνευστα γράμματα. (= Wie er [= Christus] selbst also im Vater ist, so glaubt man, dass auch der Vater auf dieselbe Art und Weise in ihm [= Christus] ist. So soll man also auch die Worte *Gott war in Christus die Welt mit sich selbst versöhnend* (2 Kor 5,19) verstehen. Man muss allerdings diesen Satz in Teile trennen und eine vernünftige Interpunktion setzen, die es verhindert, sinnlose syntaktische Verbindungen herzustellen. Man soll den Satz richtig folgendermaßen lesen: *Gott war [derjenige]*; an dieser Stelle soll man die Lektüre unterbrechen und eine Pause machen, um dann folgendes hinzuzufügen: *der in Christus die Welt mit sich selbst versöhnte*. Denn bei den Frommen werden jeder Gedanke und jede Lektüre gemäß der apostolischen und frommen Tradition an Christus gekettet. Bei den nicht Frommen ist das Gegenteil der Fall. Denn mal

¹⁴ Der griechische Text ist ediert in: K. STAAB, *Pauluskommentare aus der griechischen Kirche* (NTA 15; Münster 1933) 293¹⁰⁻¹¹.

verbinden sie etwas zu einer sinnlosen [syntaktischen] Einheit, mal trennen sie es in Teile, mal fügen sie etwas hinzu, mal streichen sie etwas weg, damit die göttlich inspirierte Schrift den Eindruck erwecken möge, das zu bestätigen, was ihnen selbst gefällt) ¹⁵.

Auch in der modernen Exegese wird die Frage nach der syntaktischen Funktion des καταλλάσσων leidenschaftlich diskutiert. So gehen etwa Gräßer und Harris davon aus, dass das problematische Partizip als *participium coniunctum* fungiere und die Aussage des Paulus im Sinne von „Gott war in Christus, als er die Welt mit sich versöhnte“ zu verstehen sei ¹⁶. Schmeller hingegen vertritt in seinem neuerdings erschienenen Kommentar zum 2. Korintherbrief die Meinung, dass ἦν zusammen mit καταλλάσσων eine Periphrase bilde, sodass der Satz des Apostels im Sinne von „Gott versöhnte in Christus die Welt mit sich“ zu interpretieren wäre ¹⁷.

Indem Cyrill im hier edierten griechischen Fragment eindringlich darum bittet, die Lektüre der Schrift nicht durcheinanderzubringen und nicht zu behaupten, Gott sei in Christus, macht er genügend deutlich, dass er — ähnlich wie Severian von Gabala, Severus von Antiochien und Schmeller — das paulinische καταλλάσσων nicht als ein *participium coniunctum* fungieren lassen möchte. Paulus will nach Cyrill nicht sagen, dass Gott in Christus sei, da Christus selbst Gott sei; er sei derjenige, der in sich die Welt mit Gott dem Vater gerade deshalb versöhnen könne, weil er Gott sei. So stellt der Apostel mit seiner Aussage nach Cyrill die Gottheit Christi keinesfalls infrage und will nicht behaupten, Gott habe in Christus lediglich eine Wohnstätte gefunden. Ähnlich äußert sich der alexandrinische Exeget auch in seinem — nur fragmentarisch erhaltenen — Kommentar zum 2. Korintherbrief:

Οὐ τοῦτο λέγει, ὅτι ἐν Χριστῷ ἦν ὁ θεὸς ὡς ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ φίλος, ἐπεὶ οὐδὲν διοίσει Χριστὸς τῶν προφητῶν ἢ ἀποστόλων, ἀλλὰ δεῖξαι φροντίζει ὁ ἀπόστολος, ὅτι Χριστῷ τις εἰ καταλλάττοιο, πρὸς θεὸν πεποιήται τὰς καταλλαγάς. αὐτὸς γὰρ ὡς ὁ υἱὸς καὶ κύριος ἑαυτῷ τὸν κόσμον καταλλάσσει διὰ τῆς πίστεως καταλλάσσει δι' ἑαυτοῦ τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρί. (= Er [= Paulus] meint damit nicht, dass Gott in Christus wie ein Freund in einem Menschen war, weil sich Christus dann von den Propheten oder von den Aposteln gar nicht unterscheiden würde; sondern der Apostel will

¹⁵ Der griechische Text und die deutsche Übersetzung sind entnommen aus: K.F. ZAWADZKI, „Zwei unbekannte griechische Fragmente des Severus von Antiochien und Theodot von Ancyra: neue antike Auslegungen zum 2. Korintherbrief“, *SE* 54 (2015) 153.

¹⁶ Vgl. E. GRÄSSER, *Der zweite Brief an die Korinther* (ÖTBK 8/I; Gütersloh 2002) 226; M.J. HARRIS, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids, MI 2005), 440-442.

¹⁷ Vgl. T. SCHMELLER, *Der zweite Brief an die Korinther* (EKK VIII/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn 2010) 332.

deutlich machen, dass derjenige, der sich mit Christus versöhnen wollte, sich mit Gott versöhnt hat. Denn indem er [= Christus] als der Sohn und der Herr die Welt durch den Glauben mit sich versöhnt, versöhnt er [diese] durch sich mit Gott dem Vater)¹⁸.

Die paulinischen Formulierungen θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ und κόσμον καταλλάσσων ἑαυτῷ darf man somit nach Cyrill syntaktisch nicht voneinander trennen; sie gehören zusammen und weisen so darauf hin, dass die — vom Alexandriner in erster Linie als Beseitigung der Sünde verstandene — Versöhnung der Welt mit Gott sich stets in Christus bzw. durch Christus vollzieht.

Zu klären bleibt noch die Frage, an wen bzw. gegen wen Cyrill sich mit seiner im hier edierten Fragment erhaltenen Auslegung von 2 Kor 5,19 richtet. Zu Beginn des Textes spricht er von „den Törichtern“ (ἄμαθεστέροι), die die Lektüre der Schrift durcheinanderbrächten, indem sie behaupteten, Gott sei in Christus. Wer sind diese Törichten? Einen entscheidenden Hinweis auf die Identität dieser Leute liefert der im edierten Text überlieferte Begriff ἄνθρωπος θεοφόρος (= Mensch, der Gott in sich trägt); Cyrill behauptet, man solle Christus nicht einen Menschen nennen, der Gott in sich trage. Damit spielt der Exeget eindeutig auf die christologische Lehre des konstantinopolitanischen Bischofs Nestorius (381-451) an. Das theologische Hauptanliegen des Nestorius — um es nur in seinen Grundzügen zu skizzieren, da es hier nicht der Ort ist, um eine detaillierte Darstellung der nestorianischen Theologie vorzulegen — besteht darin, das Zueinander der göttlichen und menschlichen Seite in Christus adäquat zu beschreiben. Nestorius unterscheidet hier sehr strikt zwischen der Gottheit und Menschheit in Christus und behauptet schließlich, dass der Mensch Christus kein Gott *sensu stricto*, sondern lediglich ein ἄνθρωπος θεοφόρος sei¹⁹. Mit der Anwendung dieses Ausdrucks auf Christus will Nestorius offenbar die Menschwerdung des göttlichen Logos mithilfe eines begrifflichen Konstrukts beschreiben, das jene Menschwerdung als eine Art Symbiose des Göttlichen und des Menschlichen in Christus verstehen ließe: Im Rahmen dieser Symbiose soll der Mensch Christus als Wohnstätte des göttlichen Logos fungieren und kann bzw. muss somit als θεοφόρος bezeichnet werden²⁰. Gegen eine solche dualistisch gedachte

¹⁸ Der griechische Text und die deutsche Übersetzung sind entnommen aus: ZAWADZKI, *Der Kommentar Cyrills von Alexandrien zum 2. Korintherbrief* (im Druck).

¹⁹ Vgl. hierzu CYRILL VON ALEXANDRIEN, *Contra Nestorium* (ACO I 1,6) 32²⁴⁻²⁵: θεοφόρον γὰρ ἡμῖν αὐτὸν πειρᾶται δεικνύειν καὶ οὐχὶ θεὸν ἀληθῆ = Denn er [= Nestorius] versucht, uns zu zeigen, dass er [= Christus] Gott in sich trug und kein wahrer Gott war.

²⁰ Ausführlich zur nestorianischen Christologie in: A. GRILLMEIER, *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche I* (Freiburg – Basel – Wien 1979) 646-660; J.A. MCGUCKIN, *St. Cyril*

Christologie, die einerseits vom göttlichen Logos und andererseits vom Menschen Christus spricht, sehr stark zwischen dem Göttlichen und Menschlichen in Christus unterscheidet und damit den Eindruck erweckt, zwei voneinander unabhängige Subjekte in Christus zu postulieren, wendet sich Cyrill in seinen Schriften mit aller Vehemenz und betont die unzertrennliche Einheit der göttlichen und menschlichen Seite in Christus. Er verwirft den Begriff ἄνθρωπος θεοφόρος²¹ und hebt so hervor, dass Christus kein Mensch ist, der Gott in sich trägt, sondern der menschengewordene Gott ist. Die von Cyrill im edierten griechischen Text geübte Kritik am Ausdruck ἄνθρωπος θεοφόρος stellt somit ein klares Indiz dafür dar, dass der Alexandriner hier die nestorianische Theologie im Blick hat. Die Törichten, von denen zu Beginn des Textes die Rede ist, sind demnach die Anhänger jener Theologie; sie versuchen, das Wort des Paulus aus 2 Kor 5,19 in ihrem Sinne zu interpretieren und damit deutlich zu machen, dass der Apostel ein Nestorianer war, der mit der Bezeichnung Christi als θεοφόρος durchaus einverstanden gewesen wäre. Der edierte griechische Text stellt eine Gegenreaktion Cyrills auf solche Interpretationsversuche dar; so ist er eindeutig in den historischen Kontext der nestorianischen Kontroverse eingebettet.

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ABSTRACT

The present article offers the first edition of a hitherto unpublished Greek fragment from the lost eighth book of Cyril of Alexandria's Commentary on the Gospel of John, transmitted in *Codex Pantokratoros* 28 (8th century). As the content of the fragment survives also in some Syriac manuscripts, the second part of the article provides a detailed philological comparison of the Greek and Syriac version of the fragment. The third part of the article examines the theological content of the fragment that offers an exegetical interpretation of 2 Cor 5,19.

of Alexandria, *The Christological Controversy*. Its History, Theology and Texts (SVigChr 23; Leiden – New York – Köln 1994) 20-107; N. RUSSELL, *Cyril of Alexandria* (The Early Church Fathers; London – New York 2000) 31-56; G. MÜNCH-LABACHER, „Cyrill von Alexandrien“, *Theologen der christlichen Antike* (Hg. W. GEERLINGS) (Darmstadt 2002) 115-128. Siehe auch S. WESSEL, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy* (Oxford – New York 2004).

²¹ Vgl. CYRILL VON ALEXANDRIEN, *Epistula 3 ad Nestorium* (DH 256): εἴ τις τολμᾷ λέγειν θεοφόρον ἄνθρωπον τὸν Χριστὸν [...], ἀνάθεμα ἔστω (= Wer zu behaupten wagt, Christus sei ein Mensch, der Gott in sich trägt, [...] der sei mit dem Anathem belegt).

BARBARIAN AND SCYTHIAN IN COL 3,11: GREEK ETHNOCENTRIC REASONING

In the Pauline letters, Paul repeatedly emphasizes the unity of the Church. This emphasis implies that disunities repeatedly happened in the newly constructed Christian communities. To explicate the disunities, Paul presents a formula in which antithetical pairs present stratified classifications in terms of ethnicity, gender, and social class (Rom 10,12; 1 Cor 12,13; Gal 3,28; Col 3,11). Among these, Col 3,11, in particular, has been considered to be more controversial than the other three passages in the Pauline letters because of the perplexing unit: “barbarian and Scythian”. The passage in Col 3,11 comprises four pairs: 1) Greek and Jew; 2) circumcised and uncircumcised; 3) barbarian and Scythian; and 4) slave and free. Unlike the other three more comprehensible oppositions, the third pair has raised many inquiries because of its obscure meaning. In particular, a puzzling term, Σκύθης, occurs only here in the entire NT, thus making it difficult to verify a specific meaning of the word in the context of this epistle. Solutions proposed by scholars can be classified in two ways: 1) those that regard the Scythians as a barbaric race and 2) those that set in contrast the two concepts in the form of an antithesis. The first approach claims that the author employs the term, Scythian, to magnify the meaning of the barbaric race and to suggest an example of what is meant by the term barbarian, namely a Scythian ¹. Other scholars, however, find in this passage an antithesis that sets in sharp contrast the barbarian and Scythian as two mutually exclusive categories. Among them, T. Hermann and David M. Goldenberg examine the two words in the contrasting sense of black versus white ². However, the broad sense of barbarians in the Greco-Roman culture of the time would seem to exclude any attempt to limit the term to mean black-skinned peoples only. Troy W. Martin views the

¹ E. LOHSE, *Colossians and Philemon*. A Commentary on the Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon (Hermeneia; Philadelphia, PA 1971) 144; M.Y. MACDONALD, *Colossians and Ephesians* (SP 17; Collegeville, MN 2000) 139; I.K. SMITH, *Heavenly Perspective*. A Study of the Apostle Paul's Response to a Jewish Mystical Movement at Colossae (LNTS 326; London – New York 2006) 199.

² The Scythians were the representatives of the white race and the barbarians of the black race. See O. MICHEL, “Σκύθης”, *TDNT* 7:447-450. Also see D.M. GOLDENBERG, “Scythian-Barbarian: The Permutations of a Classical Topos in Jewish and Christian Texts of Late Antiquity”, *JJS* 49 (1998) 87-102.

couplet as an expression of the contrast between noble and non-noble ³, but his Cynic reading is refuted by Douglas A. Campbell, who regards the set as an antithesis of free versus slave ⁴. He provides various references that identify Scythians as slaves, and barbarians as free peoples. In accordance with this view, the passage could exhibit a chiasmic arrangement: A (Greek), B (Jew), B' (circumcision), A' (uncircumcision), and A (barbarian), B (Scythian), B' (slave), A' (free). However, this neatly argued proposal has a weakness as well, because it was quite unusual to view barbarians as free in the period of early Antiquity. Scholars who insist on an antithesis in this verse have failed to propose a satisfactory explanation, and so we are still without a consensus opinion about the intended meaning of the third pair ⁵.

Regarding these approaches, it is noteworthy that these claims based on antithesis fail to recognize the omission of the conjunction καί between the two words. In the formulation of 3,11 (ὅπου οὐκ ἐνι Ἑλλήνι καὶ Ἰουδαίῳ, περιτομῇ καὶ ἀκροβυστίᾳ, βάρβαρος, Σκύθῃς, δοῦλος, ἐλεύθερος), the conjunction καί occurs for the first two pairs but is omitted in the following four words: barbarian, Scythian, slave and free. This point raises the possibility of reading it in a complementary series ⁶. This juxtaposed couplet would invite readers to observe this pair as “an enumerative continuation of the series”, as Eduard Lohse points out ⁷. In order to explore further the meaning of this enigmatic pair, this article proposes to view these two words in light of Greek ethnic reasoning. Interestingly, the first three units address ethnic issues, whereas the fourth unit deals with a social class barrier. This implies that the meaning of the third pair is in line with the first two pairs.

The first two couplets, which are connected with καί, correspond to a general way of depicting human beings. Seemingly, these two couplets

³ T.W. MARTIN, “The Scythian Perspective in Col 3:11”, *NovT* 37 (1995) 249-261. Martin observes that Cynics made use of the motif of the Scythians. For his comprehensive study on Cynics, see T.W. MARTIN, *By Philosophy and Empty Deceit. Colossians as Response to a Cynic Critique* (JSNTSup 118; Sheffield 1996).

⁴ D.A. CAMPBELL, “The Scythian Perspective in Col. 3:11: A Response to Troy Martin”, *NovT* 39 (1997) 81-84; IDEM, “Unravelling Colossians 3.11b”, *NTS* 42 (1996) 120-132.

⁵ For a discussion of these two concepts as imperial images, suggesting a connection between Col 3,11 and themes of imperial iconography, see H.O. MAIER, “Barbarians, Scythians and Imperial Iconography in the Epistle to the Colossians”, *Picturing the New Testament. Studies in Ancient Visual Images* (eds. A. WEISSENRIEDER – F. WENDT – P. GEMÜNDEN) (WUNT 2/193; Tübingen 2005); IDEM, *Picturing Paul in Empire. Imperial Image, Text and Persuasion in Colossians, Ephesians and the Pastoral Epistles* (London – New York 2013) 63-102.

⁶ CAMPBELL, “Unravelling”, 124.

⁷ LOHSE, *Colossians*, 144.

reflect a Jewish manner of classifying human beings which was familiar to Paul. In the first category, the terms, Greek and Jew, appear frequently as an antithesis in the Pauline letters, in which all non-Jews are lumped together under the category of Ἕλληνα (e.g., Rom 1,16; 2,9-10; 3,9; 10,12; 1 Cor 1,22.24; 10,32; 12,13; Gal 3,28)⁸. In the instances where Paul employs Ἕλληνα with Ἰουδαῖος, the former is normally equivalent to Gentile⁹. This notion was prevalent among the Jews who believed that they are the chosen people, distinct from all others¹⁰. That the first pair might indicate a Jewish perspective is confirmed by the ensuing second pair: “circumcised and uncircumcised” (περιτομή καὶ ἀκροβυστία)¹¹. Needless to say, circumcision represents a Jewish notion, which served to distinguish Jews from non-Jews. Paul also associates περιτομή with Jews (e.g., Rom 15,8; Gal 2,7-9; Col 4,11) and ἀκροβυστία with the Gentiles (e.g., Gal 2,7). Accordingly, these four words can be categorized as a chiasmus (ABBA) in which “Greek” corresponds to the “uncircumcised” and “Jew” corresponds to the “circumcised”¹². However, besides this Jewish perspective, what is striking is that this passage also represents a Greek view of humanity. This is relevant for the interpretation of the term, Ἕλληνα. When the two words appear together, Paul has a tendency to put Ἰουδαῖος first and then Ἕλληνα¹³. In Col 3,11, however, the order is switched, and Ἕλληνα comes first. Many have attributed the reason for this unusual ordering to the context of the Colossian community which was comprised mostly of Gentiles influenced by Hellenism¹⁴. However, the reversal of the usual order of the two terms might also express the author’s implicit allusion to the Greeks’ typical ethnic reasoning in which Ἕλληνα (Greeks) always comes first and is followed by βάρβαρος (non-Greeks). This Greek understanding, which finds expression in a representative formula that envisages all the inhabitants in the world, is reflected in Paul’s letters (e.g., Rom 1,14). Likewise, the same Greek ethnic notion is affirmed in the contrasting pair: barbarian and Scythian¹⁵. The goal of the

⁸ J.D.G. DUNN, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*. A Commentary on the Greek Text (NIGTC; Grand Rapids, MI 1996) 224.

⁹ D.J. MOO, *Galatians* (ECNT; Grand Rapids, MI 2013) 254.

¹⁰ “The Jews knew that as a member of the chosen people of God he was separated from the Gentiles, whose outstanding representatives were the Greeks”. LOHSE, *Colossians*, 143.

¹¹ DUNN, *Colossians*, 224.

¹² R.M. WILSON, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Colossians and Philemon* (ICC; London 2005) 255.

¹³ E.g., Rom 1,16; 2,9.10; 3,9; 10,12; 1 Cor 1,24; 10,32; 12,13; Gal 3,28.

¹⁴ Cf. LOHSE, *Colossians*, 143-146; P.T. O’BRIEN, *Colossians, Philemon* (WBC 44; Waco, TX 1982) 190-193.

¹⁵ A.J.M. WEDDERBURN (“The Theology of Colossians”, *The Theology of the Later Pauline Letters* [eds. A.T. LINCOLN – A.J.M. WEDDERBURN] [NTT; Cambridge 1993] 13)

following article is to explore this pair in terms of the Greeks' ethnic reasoning, more specifically, ethnocentrism. It claims that both "barbarian" and "Scythian" were terms for groups who were considered to be marginalized and devalued people from the point of view of the Greeks. In doing so, this essay argues that this pair of terms plays a key role in the author's warning about ethnic and religious arrogance in the Colossian community.

I. TERMS: "BARBARIAN" AND "SCYTHIAN" IN GREEK THOUGHT

1. *Barbarians*

The meaning of the term, βάρβαρος, has to do with a person's inability to speak Greek. The word indicates non-Greeks whose speaking sounded to the Greeks like "bar-bar-bar" (Strabo, *Geogr.* 14.2.28)¹⁶. For the Greeks, this term served to distinguish the Hellenic world from the non-Hellenic world¹⁷. But, in Greco-Roman antiquity, over time, the term was gradually loaded with various ethical and cultural connotations¹⁸. For Greeks, the crude and alien pronunciation of non-Greeks was the object of derision¹⁹. The non-Hellenes spoke harshly so that their inaccurate linguistic capability led the Greek-speaking peoples to disregard the barbarians. Subsequently, beginning in the fifth century BCE, when this term first came into fashion, the label expanded into a concept for signalling cultural or intellectual inferiority²⁰. In doing so, "barbarians" became a term loaded

points to "a more pronouncedly Greek point of view in 3.11 compared with Gal 3.28 and 1 Cor 12.13, with the addition of 'barbarians and Scythians' to the list of division transcended in Christ".

¹⁶ E.S. GRUEN, "Greeks and Non-Greeks", *The Cambridge Companion to the Hellenistic World* (eds. G.R. BUGH et al.) (Cambridge 2006) 295. Herodotus compares the barbarians speaking with the voice of a bird (*Hist.* 2.57). The barbarians' language was thought to be unintelligible. Strabo notes how it relates to Greek speech: "whenever any person speaking Greek did not pronounce it correctly but pronounced the words like barbarians who...are unable to speak it accurately..." (*Geogr.* 14.2.28). For Greeks, all foreigners were barbarians, regardless of their highly developed culture and customs. But Plutarch provides an exceptional story of a well-educated barbarian who had remarkable linguistic abilities (*Def. orac.* 421 A, B). For further discussion about barbarians, see J.M. HALL, *Ethnic Identity in Greek Antiquity* (Cambridge 1997) 44-47; E. ALMAGOR, "Who Is a Barbarian? The Barbarians in the Ethnological and Cultural Taxonomies of Strabo", *Strabo's Cultural Geography. The Making of a Kolossourgia* (eds. D. DUECK – H. LINDSAY – S. POTHECARY) (New York 2005) 42-55; GRUEN, "Greeks and Non-Greeks", 295-314.

¹⁷ GRUEN, "Greeks and Non-Greeks", 295.

¹⁸ ALMAGOR, "Who Is a Barbarian", 45.

¹⁹ ALMAGOR, "Who Is a Barbarian", 45.

²⁰ GRUEN, "Greeks and Non-Greeks", 295.

with cultural discrimination that went beyond its original meaning, in the sense of linguistic traits. Greeks used this term to stress the inferior characteristics of non-Greeks²¹. Strabo, a Greek geographer, delineates barbarians as an uncivilized group for their cultural primitivism and savage customs (*Geogr.* 7.3.2-9)²². According to Strabo, barbarians can be distinguished by the following characteristics: disorder, lack of proper sensibilities and refinement, brutality, cruelty, chicanery, deviousness, stupidity, and subordination to a despotic government²³. As such, “barbarian” conveyed a depreciatory sense with respect to language, culture, and morals²⁴.

On the other hand, by means of denigrating barbarians Greeks could highlight their own ethnic superiority. Their linguistic capability endowed them with cultural pre-eminence over the barbarians and served to strengthen their “collective identity”²⁵. Greeks did not scruple to consider themselves naturally superior to the barbarians²⁶. For this purpose, the concept of barbarians became a useful designation for the Greeks²⁷. Barbarians became a point of comparison that served to magnify the value of Greek culture. By comparing themselves with archaic barbarians and primitive savages, Greeks called themselves ἡμεροί, meaning “civilized”²⁸. They

²¹ Especially, through continuous travel and trade, Greeks collected much information about peoples in other regions. Consequently, they named other lands with respect to that of the Greeks and gathered data into geographical catalogues. In doing so, they categorized diverse races and constructed ethnic catalogues. By imaging concentric zones, Greeks divided all human beings in the world into Greeks (Ἕλληνες) and non-Greek aliens (βάρβαροι) or wild people (ἄγριοι). Furthermore, within Greek states, they developed notions of the foreigner (ξένοι). See R. ZELNICK-ABRAMOVITZ, “Xenoi”, *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History* (ed. R.S. BAGNALL) (Malden, MA 2013) 7145-7146. Basically, the term ξένοι denotes non-citizens distinguished from citizens in a *polis*. However, it also implies that they had a keen interest in *otherness*. That is, for Greeks, to explore foreign peoples was an intriguing theme.

²² ALMAGOR, “Who Is a Barbarian”, 52.

²³ C. TUPLIN, “Greek Racism? Observations on the Character and Limits of Greek Ethnic Prejudice”, *Ancient Greeks West and East* (ed. G.R. TSESTKHLADZE) (Leiden – Boston, MA 1999) 49; GRUEN, “Greeks and Non-Greeks”, 295.

²⁴ M. BARTH – H. BLANKE, *Colossians*. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary (AB 34B; New York 1994) 416.

²⁵ GRUEN, “Greeks and Non-Greeks”, 295. Also, see HALL, *Ethnic Identity*, 40–51; IDEM, *Hellenicity*. Between Ethnicity and Culture (Chicago, IL 2002) 172-189.

²⁶ D. DUECK, “The Geographical Narrative of Strabo of Amasia”, *Geography and Ethnography*. Perceptions of the World in Pre-Modern Societies (eds. K.A. RAAFLAUB – R.J.A. TALBERT) (Chichester – Malden, MA 2010) 242-243.

²⁷ “[...] one way to define what Greeks were like is through a contrast with barbarian characteristics”: TUPLIN, “Greek Racism”, 49.

²⁸ E.C. STEWART, *Gathered around Jesus*. An Alternative Spatial Practice in the Gospel of Mark (Eugene, OR 2009) 99; cf. K. GEUS, “Space and Geography”, *A Companion to the Hellenistic World* (ed. A. ERSKINE) (Oxford 2005) 234. In his book, Strabo investigates numerous nations and regions which make up the *oikoumene*, but his analysis of each nation is based on its position in a sort of conceptual spectrum between two extremes: barbarians

then established the distinctiveness of Greek values and character ²⁹. Thus, viewing barbarians negatively could be a rhetorical strategy to heighten their own dignity and to relativize the position of the barbarians. Furthermore, the rhetorical contrast formulated in their minds a vertical structure between the Greeks, as being of a higher class, and non-Greeks, as being of a lower class. The Greek ethnological descriptions draw a conceptual borderline between civilized Greeks and barbarians ³⁰. In this way, the cultural supremacy and ethnic pride of the Greeks over non-Greeks are evident in that period and thus are expressed through the term, βάρβαρος ³¹. Indeed, this notion appears in the Pauline letters, as well. Paul refers to non-Greeks who cannot speak Greek as barbarians (e.g., 1 Cor 14,11) ³², but Paul also compares Greeks with the wise and barbarians with the foolish (e.g., Rom 1,14) ³³.

2. The Scythians

The ethnic axis of the Greeks-barbarians could be expanded to the geographical axis of the centre-margin. Greeks maintained a considerable interest in the inhabited world, and accordingly they had a mental image of the Greek-centred world. Consequently, the term, οἰκουμένη, took on a meaning that corresponded to their mental image of the inhabited world ³⁴.

or civilized. See D. DUECK, *Strabo of Amasia. A Greek Man of Letters in Augustan Rome* (London – New York 2000) 79.

²⁹ GRUEN, "Greeks and Non-Greeks", 295.

³⁰ DUECK, "Geographical Narrative of Strabo", 243.

³¹ Besides βάρβαρος, ἔθνη was also employed to indicate non-Greeks. While ἔθνος indicates a specific group in a neutral sense, ἔθνη was sometimes used with cultural and ideological connotations, labelling groups as "non-Hellenic people". Since the time of Aristotle, unlike ἔθνος, ἔθνη was used to indicate people other than Greeks (*Pol.* 1324b10). Aristotle considered "primitive" those who lived in northwestern Greece in comparison with the Hellenes of the *polis*. See N. DENZEY, "The Limits of Ethnic Categories", *Handbook of Early Christianity. Social Science Approaches* (eds. A.J. BLASI – J. DUHAIME – P. TURCOTTE) (Walnut Creek, CA 2002) 494. In doing so, Greeks used this term to designate a category of difference, otherness, and implicit inferiority. The Romans also made similar distinctions between Romans and non-Romans, distinguishing between a *populus* and a *natio*. D.C. DULING, "Ethnicity, Ethnocentrism, and the Matthean Ethnos", *BTB* 35 (2005) 129.

³² Furthermore, the Jews also seem to have appropriated this slogan, correctly assuming that they themselves belong to the barbarians. H.D. BETZ, *Galatians. A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia, PA 1979) 192.

³³ "I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish (Ἐλλῆσιν τε καὶ βαρβάροις, σοφοῖς τε καὶ ἀνοήτοις ὀφειλέτης εἰμί)" (Rom 1,14)

³⁴ This term is derived from the passive present participle of the Greek verb, οἰκέω, "to inhabit or dwell." It was a participle originally referring to γῆ but the Greeks normally employed this term to refer to the extent of territory for people to live. T. SCHMIDT, "Oikoumene", *Brill's New Pauly. Encyclopaedia of the Ancient World. Antiquity Vol. 10* (Obl-Phe)

For the Greeks, the conception of the *oikoumene* is basically rooted in the belief that they possessed the central place of the entire *oikoumene* ³⁵. All thoughts about the inhabited world were generated from a central locus. They defined all the inhabitable zones from their own position, since the era of Homer. In the tale of Odysseus' homeward journey, his voyage and return home become a paradigm for the recognition that his homeland was centrally located within the inhabited world ³⁶. The Greeks considered Delphi, located high on Mt. Parnassus, as the centre of the entire *oikoumene* ³⁷. They also identified Delphi with the notion of ὀμφαλός, "navel", in the inhabited world. Delphi, as the moral and geographical centre, was perceived as the place to protect the *Omphalos* ³⁸. Delphi, according to Strabo, was "almost in the centre of Greece taken as a whole [...] it was also believed to be in the centre of the inhabited world, and people called it the navel (ὀμφαλός) of the earth" (*Geogr.* 9.3.6) ³⁹. In the representation of the *oikoumene* in the form of a human body, the centre was synonymous with a tall mountain which represents the navel (ὀμφαλός) of the body ⁴⁰. This notion indicates that Greeks inhabited a higher place than the barbarians.

On the other hand, as the alleged possessors of the central locus of the world, they tried to define the features of the margins of the inhabited world. Their perceptions of the margin correlate with their own central position in the entire world. For Greeks who believed that they lived at the *Omphalos* of the known world, the concept of the "outer limit" was a way for them to underline their central significance as well as their higher position. Polybius notes, "nearly all authors or at least the greater number

(eds. H. CANKI – H. SCHNEIDER – C.F. SALAZAR) (Leiden 2007) 73-75. Since the time of Herodotus, the term was employed by Greek geographers and historians to indicate the inhabited world (cf. Herodotus, *Hist.* 4.110).

³⁵ STEWART, *Gathered around Jesus*, 102.

³⁶ S.G. COLE, "'I Know the Number of the Sand and the Measure of the Sea': Geography and Difference in the Early Greek World", *Geography and Ethnography*, 200. Cf. F. HARTOG, *Memories of Odysseus* (Edinburgh 2001) 15-21.

³⁷ Plato, *Rep.* 427 b, c; Strabo, *Geogr.* 9.3.6; Livy, 38.48.2; Ovid, *Metam.* 10.168. In essence, Delphi was the place where people hear the gods' words. The sanctuary was the place to which people travelled to experience an oracle. COLE, "I Know the Number", 199. But, Delphi not only had been a sacred place since the pre-classical period, but it was also considered the geographical centre of the *oikoumene*.

³⁸ GRUEN, "Greeks and Non-Greeks", 199.

³⁹ Plutarch also notes this (*Def. orac.* 409 E-410 A).

⁴⁰ It was quite a prevalent tradition of the Greeks. The concept of the *Omphalos* implies that Greeks possess the higher place such as the embryo. M. ELLIADE, *Cosmos and History. The Myth of the Eternal Return* (New York 1959) 12-17. This notion was prevalent among the Jews as well. See S. TALMON, *Literary Studies in the Hebrew Bible. Form and Content* (Jerusalem – Leiden 1993) 50-58.

have attempted to describe the peculiarities and the situation of the countries at the extremities of the known world” (τὰς ἐσχάταις τόπων τῆς καθ’ ἡμᾶς οἰκουμένης) (*Hist.* 3.58.2). Greeks regarded the *oikoumene* as “our world” (καθ’ ἡμᾶς οἰκουμένης). That is, they were located at the navel of the world from which they looked around at the rest of the inhabited world and its limits. They looked *down* at the margins as the exact opposite of their own location. As a result, discussions about these marginal places were the basis for stories of adventure that involved the exploration of inferior places by superior peoples who came from the *Omphalos* and so were proud of being from the centre of the *oikoumene* and far from the margins. Subsequently, such travels provided the chance for civilized peoples to encounter inferior *others* who resided in wild and distant territories.

Similarly, the peoples who were farthest removed from the *Omphalos*, where Greeks achieved the highest cultural prosperity, were considered to be the most savage peoples of an inferior culture. In Homer’s writings, Odysseus’ journeys to unknown places reflect a dangerous atmosphere of “violent savages without justice” (*Od.* 4.121-122). According to Greek concepts, the savage people were extraordinary and highly unusual. Greeks also viewed them as wild people with outrageous customs (e.g., Herodotus, *Hist.* 4.100, 105, 109). Herodotus writes that their appearance is often peculiar and that they live with wild beasts. He even speaks of “the dog-headed men and the headless that have their eyes in their breasts” (*Hist.* 4.191). James S. Romm summarizes this point as follows: “Ethnocentrism [...] denotes a construct of space which sees the centre of the world as the best or most advanced location, and therefore demotes distant peoples to the status of unworthy savages. An inversion of this scheme, by contrast, privileges the edges of the earth over the centre”⁴¹. In doing so, Greeks solidified their ethnic privilege in comparison to the rest of the *oikoumene*.

For Greeks and Romans, it was believed that there were four edges of the inhabited world: Spain was located at the western edge; India at the eastern edge; Ethiopia at the southern edge; and Scythia at the northern edge (cf. Strabo, *Geogr.* 1.1.13; 1.2.28; Ptolemy, *Tetra.* 2.2.2; 2.3.6-7)⁴².

⁴¹ J.S. ROMM, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought. Geography, Exploration, and Fiction* (Princeton, NJ 1992) 46.

⁴² J.E. SPITTLER, “Christianity at the Edges: Representations of the Ends of the Earth in the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles”, *The Rise and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries of the Common Era* (eds. C.K. ROTHSCHILD – J. SCHRÖTER) (WUNT 301; Tübingen 2013) 357. This notion appears in the Hellenistic Jewish writings too. For instance, for Philo, the inhabitable world ranged from India in the east to Spain in the west, and from Scythia in the north to Ethiopia (Libya) in the south (*Somm.* 2.59; *Spec.* 3:15-23; *Quod Deus* 173-175).

Among them, particularly, the northern and southern edges were known as the places where savage people lived. This was also relevant to the climatic theory. According to Strabo, the *oikoumene* vertically comprised five climatic zones (*Geogr.* 2.2.1-2). The five zones comprised the following: frigid zones in the northern and southern poles, temperate zones in the northern and southern areas, and a torrid zone at the equator. Among these five zones, only two temperate areas were regarded as fit for human habitation. On the contrary, the coldest and hottest zones were described as harsh zones for habitation⁴³. The peoples who lived at the two extremes were also considered as savages⁴⁴. This assumption emanated from the belief that geographic location is the most essential factor in the formation of an individual's identity. This claim appears prominently in the work of Hippocrates entitled *Airs, Waters, Places*. According to Hippocrates, peoples in the mild weather zones are gentler in character because of the temperate climate rooted in the uniformity of the seasons (16). By contrast, peoples at the extremes experienced mental shocks and violent physical changes. It was believed that such circumstances would determine their inferior characteristics. Hippocrates emphasized that climatic conditions decisively affected an individual's ethical conduct⁴⁵. Consequently, it was inevitable for the two groups in the extreme northern and southern parts, namely Scythians and Ethiopians, to be considered the more savage peoples with uncivilized behaviours⁴⁶.

However, the customary reading of the Scythians from a disparaging angle requires careful attention, especially because it was problematic to consider the Scythians as savage peoples⁴⁷. Strictly speaking, views of the Scythians were ambivalent. While the savagery of the Scythians was well known, there were also several positive elements in the image of the Scythians in Greek literature. Romm points out that the two opposing perspectives seem to oscillate as "an ethnocentric impulse and its inverse"⁴⁸. According to Romm's alternative suggestion, Ephorus, an ancient Greek historian, emphasized the *opposite* aspect of the customary understanding of the Scythians.

⁴³ Cf. DUECK, "Geographical Narrative of Strabo", 239-241. Ptolemy also provides a similar claim. As for the southern and northern edges of the known world, he writes that there were savage peoples (*Tetra.* 2.2.2; 2.3.6-7).

⁴⁴ STEWART, *Gathered around Jesus*, 99.

⁴⁵ TUPLIN, "Greek Racism", 64.

⁴⁶ GOLDENBERG, "Scythian-Barbarian", 97.

⁴⁷ Strictly speaking, Scythians did not dwell at the end of the inhabited world. Rather, the Scythians lived in a northern region near the Black Sea.

⁴⁸ ROMM, *Edges of the Earth*, 46.

Previous writers, Ephorus says, only tell about the savagery of the Scythians, knowing that terrible and strange phenomena produce a vivid effect; but he, for his part, says that one must do the opposite of this, and depict exemplary models of humanity. Thus he resolves to write about those Scythians who practice the most righteous customs, like the Nomad Scythians, who are fed on the milk of horses, and who surpass all men in justice. (Strabo, *Geogr.* 7.3.9)

Quoting Ephorus' view, Strabo focuses more on the noble aspect of the Scythian than on the savage aspect. This view appears in Herodotus too: "But the Scythian people have discovered the greatest thing in human affairs, and are the most wise of all those that we know, though I do not admire their other tendencies. The greatest thing they have devised is that no one who comes against them can escape, and that they cannot be caught if they do not want to be found" (*Hist.* 4.46) ⁴⁹. Furthermore, Herodotus sheds light on the fact that they had their own special traditions, such as the funeral rites for their kings (*Hist.* 4.71–2) ⁵⁰. Consequently, their mobile life displayed nomadic nobility as well. For example, in their practice of nomadism they also maintained urban-like settlements ⁵¹. Thus, according to the above discussions, it is unlikely that they were violent savages who practiced outrageous customs and cannibalism. It is remarkable, therefore, that Greeks mostly generalized the Scythians as savage people ⁵². In a sense, this biased view came not so much from the Greeks' objective observations of the Scythians but more from their subjective presumptions. In other words, this prejudice implied that Greeks generally had an inclination to view only one (negative) aspect of the Scythians in order to solidify and affirm their own ethnic ideology. This biased stance meant that the Greeks viewed the Scythians with a distorted perception. By describing them as savages and then derogating them, neglecting the positive aspect of the Scythians, Greeks affirmed their own superior position as a people with a highly developed culture, who lived not only in the mild weather zone but also at the centre of the known world. This rhetoric of contrast was an important way for the Greeks to distinguish themselves

⁴⁹ However, Herodotus identifies the Scythians as savages elsewhere (cf. *Hist.* 4.105–6). He writes of the cannibalism of the Scythians, noting that they drink the blood of the enemy they killed. (*Hist.* 4.64)

⁵⁰ See A.I. IVANTCHIK, "The Funeral of Scythian Kings: The Historical Reality and the Description of Herodotus (4.71–72)", *The Barbarians of Ancient Europe. Realities and Interactions* (ed. L. BONFANTE) (Cambridge – New York 2011) 71–106.

⁵¹ R. ROLLE, "The Scythians: Between Mobility, Tomb Architecture, and Early Urban Structures", *The Barbarians of Ancient Europe*, 107. For positive aspects of the Scythians, see D. BRANUND, "Greeks, Scythians and Hippake, or 'Reading Mare's-Cheese'", *Ancient Greeks West and East* (ed. G.R. TSESTKHLADZE) (Leiden – Boston, MA 1999) 521–530.

⁵² It was the case for Romans as well. (e.g., Pliny, *Nat.* 7.9)

from others. It played a key role in converting the horizontal concept of “center-margin” into a vertical structure. As a result, Greeks fabricated the conception of peoples such as the Scythians as culturally inferior barbarians who lived on the margins of the civilized world.

Such views had effects on Jewish literature as well. References to Scythians appear frequently in Second Temple Jewish literature. What is striking is that, unlike the Ethiopians, the Scythians are predominantly portrayed as savages, demonstrating crudeness in their behaviours, excesses, and ferocity⁵³. In the Second Temple period, the Scythians were considered as savage peoples by Jews (e.g., 2 Macc 4,47; 3 Macc 7,5-6; 4 Macc 10,7; Philo, *Legat.* 10; and Josephus, *C. Ap.* 2.269)⁵⁴. Consequently, Jewish writers also adopted a subjective, limited, and negative view of the Scythians.

II. ARROGANT OPPONENTS IN COLOSSAE

The two words — barbarians and Scythians — were commonly employed by the Greeks in their rhetorical of cultural superiority. They are among the terms that the Greeks used to express their negative evaluation of non-Greeks, and thereby to bolster their proud claim to a high position among the cultures of the world⁵⁵. Such ideologically based discussions of ethnicity in ancient Greek sources are relevant for an interpretation of Colossians. The letter was clearly addressed to a community that was divided into socially and culturally defined groups, with some maintaining an attitude of arrogance and superiority over their opponents⁵⁶.

The majority of the members of the Colossian church seem to have been believers of Gentile origin (1,12,27; 2,13)⁵⁷, and they stood in the “firmness of faith in Christ” (2,5). The text of the letter, however, suggests that

⁵³ DUNN, *Colossians*, 225.

⁵⁴ Later, the savageness is clearly attested in the *Acts of Andrew and Matthias* as well. SPITTLER, “Christianity at the Edges”, 370.

⁵⁵ LOHSE, *Colossians*, 117.

⁵⁶ The discussion of the Colossian heresy makes clear that this remains a controversial issue. Proposed explanations of the “false teaching” cover a broad range of possibilities: Hellenistic philosophy, Gnosticizing syncretism, Jewish Gnosticism, or mysticism. This study takes the position that the false teaching was basically Jewish in character. For a discussion of the connection between the opponents and Judaism, see DUNN, *Colossians*, 29-33; M.M. THOMPSON, *Colossians and Philemon* (Grand Rapids, MI 2005) 6-9; M.F. BIRD, *Colossians and Philemon. A New Covenant Commentary* (Eugene, OR 2009) 15-26.

⁵⁷ J.P. HEIL, *Colossians. Encouragement to Walk in All Wisdom as Holy Ones in Christ* (SBLECL 4; Atlanta, GA 2010) 8.

the congregation was exposed to pressure to adopt certain Jewish customs, such as circumcision (2,11), dietary restrictions, and the observance of Sabbath and other festivals (2,16). Making the situation even more difficult was the efforts of those who tried to impose these religious practices by exalting to a higher status those who did observe these Jewish traditions and by degrading to a lower status those who did not. Such individuals could be characterized as false teachers, and they exhibited an arrogance that was comparable to the haughtiness of the Greeks when they looked down upon barbarians as men living far removed from the centre of civilization. In the letter to the Colossians, the author sets himself against the opponents who presumed to judge negatively the newly assimilated Christ-followers in the community. The opponents were portrayed as individuals of “philosophy and empty deceit” (τῆς φιλοσοφίας καὶ κενῆς ἀπάτης) (2,8). They acted according to human tradition and elemental spirits of the universe. The false teachers are charged with trying to “snare” or “hold captive” (συλᾱγωγῶν) the believers who did not observe certain traditions (2,8). Lohse associates this word συλᾱγωγῶν with “the evil intent of those who are trying to gain influence over the community”⁵⁸. In this manner, the opponents caused trouble at Colossae.

The Colossian heretical teachings resulted in serious problems. Firstly, the false teachers condemned those who did not adhere to the Jewish traditions. The passage in 2,16 reads: “Therefore do not let anyone condemn (κρινέτω) you in matters of food and drink or of observing festivals, new moons, or Sabbaths” (2,16)⁵⁹. The term κρίνω contains a wider range of meanings: to find fault with, criticize, judge and condemn. The primary meaning, however, is “to set apart so as to distinguish or separate”⁶⁰. Considering this basic meaning, one can argue that this term implies that the judgment of the opponents caused *separation* of groups within the Church. Furthermore, the notion of judging (κρίνειν) in 2,16 is expanded to the subsequent exhortation in 2,18⁶¹: “Do not let anyone disqualify (καταβραβεύετω) you, insisting on self-abasement and worship of angels, dwelling on visions, puffed up without cause by a human way of thinking” (2,18). Their teachings disqualified those who did not observe the traditions. The compound verb καταβραβεύετω (“to disqualify, discredit, disvalue”), which is equivalent to κρίνειν in 2,16, is derived from the simple verb βραβεύετω, which means “acts as umpire or as one who gives the

⁵⁸ LOHSE, *Colossians*, 94.

⁵⁹ The present imperative, κρινέτω, implies that the judgment was already carried out by the opponents. O'BRIEN, *Colossians*, 138.

⁶⁰ BDAG, s.v. κρίνω. See also WILSON, *Colossians*, 217.

⁶¹ HEIL, *Colossians*, 123.

prize”⁶². In this passage, the author exhorts the readers to resist the efforts of those who pretended to be an umpire by judging various groups in the congregation in a prejudicial and derogatory way. In other words, by devaluing those who did not observe the Jewish rules, the opponents attempted to set themselves in a superior position, just as the Greeks did in relation to the barbarians and Scythians.

This attitude implies a sense of arrogance. The opponents are portrayed as vain and arrogant people who were preoccupied with “a human way of thinking” (ὕπὸ τοῦ νοὸς τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ) (2,18). The term φυσικόω, delineating their conceit, occurs in Paul’s warning against the Corinthians’ haughtiness in attempting to exalt themselves above others (e.g., 1 Cor 4,6.18-19; 5,2; 8,1; 13,4)⁶³. The same term reappears in Col 2,18, where the author is sharply critical of those who were puffed up with a sense of superiority over others⁶⁴. They were obsessed with their own religious visionary experiences⁶⁵. Also, their teaching and ritual practices caused them to be controlled by a merely fleshly way of thinking⁶⁶. And this led them to be boastful and judgmental within the Colossian community⁶⁷. The arrogant attitude of the opponents is portrayed as “vain and senseless” (εἰκῆ), in itself (2,18). The demands that they make on others are based on elementary (στοιχεῖον) and self-imposed (ἐθελοθρησκία) principles (2,20.23). The author insists, therefore, that no one in the congregation should any longer submit to the regulations (δογματίζεσθε) which the false teachers proudly demand (2,20). This is because the regulations are no more than legal demands (δόγματα) that stood in opposition to following Christ (2,14).

The primary concern of the opponents was to assert their superiority over others, and they utilized the issue of adherence to the Jewish traditions to this end. This strategy involved drawing a borderline to demarcate groups within the congregation. Consequently, it established a vertical structure with the arrogant peoples who were exalting themselves above others on the top, and the disregarded captives (2,8) on the bottom. The author of the letter insists that the elemental rules promoted by the opponents needed to be abolished because God had already erased the certificate of indebtedness, nailing it to the Cross (2,14). Thus, the older regulations should no longer prevail for the newly converted believers in the

⁶² E. STAUFFER, “βραβεύετω”, *TDNT* 1:637-639.

⁶³ O’BRIEN, *Colossians*, 146.

⁶⁴ LOHSE, *Colossians*, 117.

⁶⁵ D.E. GARLAND, *Colossians and Philemon* (Grand Rapids, MI 1998) 181.

⁶⁶ HEIL, *Colossians*, 126.

⁶⁷ LOHSE, *Colossians*, 121.

community. The demands were nothing more than δόγματα, which the opponents used to bolster their sense of superiority. Such behaviour did not reflect the rules of Christ (2,8).

III. READING 3,11

The opponents' conceit in 2,8-19 is helpful in resolving the issue about the meaning of barbarians and Scythians in 3,11. The vanity of the opponents echoes the arrogant views of the Greeks toward these two groups of people. The author's claim that the false teachers were preoccupied with religious experiences mirrors the attitude of the Greeks who were obsessed with ethnic pride over non-Greeks. Furthermore, just as the Greeks divided the human population into unequal groups, so did the opponents attempt to divide the community into separated groups, thus causing trouble. Accordingly, the formula in 3,11 makes the point that there should be no distinction between those who arrogantly constitute themselves as judges over other persons, and those who are held captive by these judgments. It claims that nobody has the right to arrogantly set him/herself as an "umpire" over others. To emphasize oneness in Christ, the author deductively approaches this significant issue through comprehensive examples. The author refers to the four units which envisage the biased demarcation of humanity in this passage.

Col 3,11 begins with the couplet — Greek and Jew. This unit corresponds to the introductory terms regarding these categories. Above all, this pair reflects a typical Jewish perspective. However, as discussed above, the passage actually contains both Jewish and Greek ethnocentric views, which interestingly resemble each other ⁶⁸. Both Greeks and Jews boastfully distinguished themselves from others. Moreover, their own characteristic ethnic views are based on inequality and polarity. Just as the Greeks made a distinction between the Greeks who inhabited the centre of the *oikoumene* and non-Greeks (barbarians) located in marginalized places, so did the Jews establish a basic distinction between Jews who possess the holy place, Mt. Zion, and non-Jews (Gentiles) living beyond the Judean lands ⁶⁹. In essence, both Jews and Greeks imagined humanity from their own positions. Similar to the Greeks, Jews bolstered their position as the

⁶⁸ For comprehensive discussions on the perspectives of Greeks and Jews toward others, see E.S. GRUEN, *Rethinking the Other in Antiquity* (Princeton, NJ 2011) 253–307.

⁶⁹ "It (Hellenes) may...allude to the special pride Greeks felt for their cultural tradition as representing the acme of human greatness, comparable to the pride Jews felt in their nationhood". D.M. HAY, *Colossians* (ANTC; Nashville, TN 2000) 127-128.

chosen people and boasted of their own superiority over non-Jews. This understanding implied the notion of inferior *otherness* ⁷⁰. Such was the case for the Christian church in Colossae.

The second unit sheds light on the contrast of the circumcised and uncircumcised. Circumcision was a practice by which the Jews differentiated their own nation from other peoples ⁷¹. Consequently, this can be viewed as a topic that displays Jewish ethnic-religious arrogance. Circumcision is an epitomized term, involving various issues in Colossae such as philosophy, elements of the universe, and legal demands (cf. 2,6-19). This issue lay in the background of the Jewish regulations ⁷². Accordingly, in the second couplet, getting beyond circumcision reflected the current situation in the community ⁷³. The author also criticizes the heretical teachings which internalized the Jewish polarization of the congregation into two groups, “us” and “others” ⁷⁴. Simultaneously, this unit sheds light on the trouble caused by the opponents.

The third couplet — barbarians and Scythian — functions as a comprehensive background for supporting the first two units discussed above. Given the pervasiveness of Hellenistic influence in the Mediterranean basin, including Colossae ⁷⁵, this Greek frame might be an instructive example for all groups within the congregation. The main target of this pair are the false teachers. Furthermore, this pair explains that the opponents’ behaviour within the church echoes the Greeks’ ethnic arrogance toward these two kinds of people. In particular, given that Scythians were perceived as savage people throughout Jewish literature, Jewish audiences also might have embraced the connotation of the term. From this perspective, the third pair — barbarians and Scythians — could have been viewed as an optimal pair from which both Jewish and Gentile audiences could grasp the author’s point ⁷⁶. In doing so, it underscores the seriousness of the situation in the community.

⁷⁰ As for the themes of identity and *otherness* in Colossians, see M. SHKUL, “New Identity and Cultural Baggage: Identity and Otherness in Colossians”, *T&T Clark Handbook to Social Identity in the New Testament* (eds. J.B. TUCKER – C.A. BAKER) (London 2014) 367-387.

⁷¹ BARTH – BLANKE, *Colossians*, 416.

⁷² DUNN, *Colossians*, 175.

⁷³ In particular, the matter of circumcision is also the case. The fleshly circumcision would be substituted by the spiritual circumcision rooted in baptism (2,11-12). Baptism creates unity with Christ (2:12), and reaches the renewal with Christ (3,10).

⁷⁴ SHKUL, “New Identity”, 373, n. 22.

⁷⁵ DUNN, *Colossians*, 224.

⁷⁶ The main congregation is known as being of Gentile origin, but it would appear that the Christian church in Colossae was made up of both Jews and Gentiles. SMITH, *Heavenly Perspective*, 5.

This overall claim can be a clue for understanding the fourth couplet — slave and free — as well. Even though this unit is relevant to social issues rather than to ethnic-religious themes, it also points to an immanent vertical structure in society: slavery, which was antithetical to the Greek ideal of freedom⁷⁷. Just as ethnic-religious arrogance brought about unequal structures, so also did social barriers establish unequal structures in the church.

Thus, in order to overcome the problems of disunity, the author focuses on renewal in Christ (3,10-11). God brings to an end all distinctions between human beings — from different traditions, ethnicity, gender, and social class. And unity will only be possible when they live in Christ, who is the Son of Israel's God (cf. 1,1; 2,6.11: 3,11). Hence, they should seek the things that are above (τὰ ἄνω) rather than those that were on earth (3,1-2). The new life in Christ does not rely on the observance of Jewish practices which belong to the earthly realm (2,20; 3,2). They must clothe themselves with “the new self” (3,10) in which such distinctions are transcended⁷⁸. Then, and only then, will the community accomplish unity in perfect harmony (3,14).

IV. CONCLUSION

This article regarding Col 3,11 attempts to read the third pair — barbarian and Scythian — in a complimentary series rather than from an antithetical perspective, thereby claiming that these puzzling terms function as a unit to display the Greeks' haughtiness toward others and to shed light on the opponents' attitude toward the Colossian congregation. Investigation of how the barbarian and Scythian were perceived and understood provides a new angle from which to view not only Col 3,11, but also the entire letter to the Colossians as well. These two terms might be the best option for the author to express his own intention and to magnify the menace of the opponents. In doing so, the author firmly points out that no one should be a judge who arrogantly judges others.

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⁷⁷ DUNN, *Colossians*, 226.

⁷⁸ C.H. TALBERT, *Ephesians and Colossians* (PCNT; Grand Rapids, MI 2007) 228.

SUMMARY

This article examines the puzzling pair — barbarian and Scythian — in Col 3,11 in connection with Greek ethnocentric arrogance. These two terms represent categories that the Greeks often used in discussions of their own cultural superiority over other marginalized peoples. In the Letter to the Colossians, this Greek ethnic frame re-emerges in the depiction of the opponents as arrogant false teachers who judge and denigrate those who do not completely observe Jewish regulations. Their haughty stance echoes the Greek attitude toward the barbarians and the Scythians. In this light, the couplet functions to mirror the opponents' conceit in the author's warning against ethnic-religious arrogance in the Colossian congregation.

THE PARADOX OF HIGH CHRISTOLOGY IN HEBREWS 1

The presence of paradox as a literary device and rhetorical feature in the Letter to the Hebrews gets sporadic mention by commentators ¹. References to paradox in Hebrews tend to focus on a single example rather than a comprehensive pattern ². The treatment of this topic is irregular, and paradox remains on the periphery of contemporary scholarship. The term “paradox” may be broadly defined as the investigation of a topic in different voices, styles, and terms. True paradoxes consist of *contradictions*, while false paradoxes (antinomies) consist of *apparent contradictions* ³. Paradox is often a helpful term to describe the tensions found in the wisdom literature, narrative worlds, and prophetic writings of the Hebrew Bible ⁴. The category of “paradox” has become important for explanations of Paul’s theology (e.g. the righteous God who paradoxically justifies the ungodly in Rom 4,5) ⁵. Paradox is also an important feature in the Gospel of Mark, and it is widely used throughout the parables and the depiction of the Passion ⁶. Yet paradox remains a neglected topic in the study of Hebrews as an integral element of its rhetorical and pastoral strategy. Contemporary studies of Hebrews do engage with the concept of paradox, but only in limited ways. The central thesis of this study is that paradox or apparent contradiction in Heb 1,1-14 is an important rhetorical feature that seeks to elicit an intellectual act of faith on the part of the reader.

The neglect of paradox as a feature in Hebrews may be due to the fact that it is not always considered a formal category for Greco-Roman

¹ For the purposes of this study, I assume that Hebrews is a letter, with some affinities to a sermon. Genre is not a matter of importance to my argument.

² O.J. FILTVEDT (*The Identity of God’s People and the Paradox of Hebrews* [WUNT 2/400; Tübingen 2015] 1) argues there is a single paradox that characterizes all of Hebrews: the identity of God’s people as it relates to “newness and continuity”.

³ C.J. SWEARINGEN, “The Tongues of Men: Understanding Greek Rhetorical Sources for Paul’s Letters to the Romans and I Corinthians”, *Rhetorical Argumentation in Biblical Texts. Essays from the Lund 2000 Conference* (eds. A. ERIKSSON et al.) (Harrisburg, PA 2002) 232-242, here 241.

⁴ J. MARAIS, *Representation in Old Testament Narrative Texts* (BIS 36; Leiden 1998) 172.

⁵ L.J. WATERS, “Paradoxes in the Pauline Epistles”, *BibSac* 167 (2010) 423-441; D.A. CARSON – P.T. O’BRIEN – M.A. SEIFRID (eds.), *Justification and Variegated Nomism. Volume II, The Paradoxes of Paul* (WUNT 181; Tübingen 2004).

⁶ L.C. SWEAT, *The Theological Role of Paradox in the Gospel of Mark* (LNTS 492; London 2013); N.F. SANTOS, *The Paradox of Authority and Servanthood in the Gospel of Mark* (JSNTSup 237; Sheffield 2003).

rhetoric. One commentator even argues that paradox was a “fashionable” model of Greco-Roman rhetoric ⁷. In support of this conclusion, one can observe that Cicero wrote *Paradoxa Stoicorum* in 46 BCE, “a defense of the Stoic tenets known as the paradoxes” ⁸. Cicero used paradox to rhetorically attack those whom he considered “mad, rather than only stupid or unprincipled” ⁹. Paradox was also an important feature in the orations of Isocrates (436-338 BCE), especially *Ad Nicoclem*, *Helen*, and *Busiris* ¹⁰. Despite the importance of paradox in Greco-Roman writings, it continues to receive little attention, even in broader surveys of New Testament rhetoric ¹¹. In addition, paradox may be neglected because the word “paradox” is never found in the letter. What paradox is found in Hebrews is based not on terminology or the presence of specific words, but on the presence of certain concepts and their relation to each other. A text does not need to use a word (e.g. πίστις) in order for the concept to be present ¹². But evidence must be provided in order to sustain claims for the presence of implicit concepts.

In this study, the centrality of paradox or apparent contradiction in Heb 1,1-14 is developed in three successive steps. The first section explains how paradox frames the discourse by establishing expectations in the first chapter of Hebrews. The major conclusion of this first section is that the presence of paradox in the first textual units frames the discourse and establishes expectations for the readers. Additionally, the study seeks to demonstrate that the presentation of Christology in Heb 1,1-14 demands an element of logical resolution through the act of faith which also includes an intellectual component. At the very least, the first chapter of Hebrews presents a paradigm for understanding how the reader should wrestle with the tensions and difficulties of redemptive-history. The second section of the article answers the question: why paradox? In answer to this question, I propose that paradox elicits an act of intellectually robust faith that points to the path one must take in order to integrate Jesus into the divine

⁷ H.A. FISCHER, *Rabbinic Literature and Greco-Roman Philosophy. A Study of Epicurea and Phetorica in Early Midrashic Writings* (Leiden 1973) 149, n. 116.

⁸ D. MEHL, “The Stoic Paradoxes According to Cicero”, *Vertis in Usum. Studies in Honor of Edward Courtney* (eds. J.F. MILLER – C. DAMON – K.S. MYERS) (BA 161; Leipzig 2002) 39.

⁹ In this case, Cicero’s rhetorical target was Publius Clodius Pulcher; see B.P. WALLACH, “Rhetoric and Paradox: Cicero, ‘Paradoxa Stoicorum IV’”, *Hermes* 118 (1990) 173.

¹⁰ T. BLANK, “Isocrates on Paradoxical Discourse”, *Rhetorica. A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 31 (2013) 1-33.

¹¹ B. WITHERINGTON III, *New Testament Rhetoric. An Introductory Guide* (Eugene, OR 2009).

¹² M.C. EASTER, *Faith and the Faithfulness of Jesus in Hebrews* (SNTSMS 160; Cambridge 2014) 20.

identity of the one true God of Israel. The article concludes with a third section that conceptualizes paradox within the larger category of early Christian discourse. This section offers suggestions for how paradox might be integrated into the larger pastoral purposes of this “word of exhortation” (Heb 13,22).

I. PARADOX FRAMES THE DISCOURSE

The first chapter of Hebrews is foundational for the rhetorical and literary themes that are used throughout the whole text. The aim of the first two chapters of Hebrews is the positive task of laying a foundational “understanding of the identity of Jesus Christ, as the presupposition for any further christological reflection later in the work”¹³. The Christology of the first chapter of Hebrews presents an “elementary doctrine of Christ” (Heb 6,1) that requires the exercise of both faith and logic. It is “doctrine” in the sense that these are not bare facts but rather facts interpreted from a certain perspective. The specific paradox that the reader immediately encounters is that God has a son who is his equal in glory (Heb 1,3) and equally worthy of worship (Heb 1,6). The paradox may be simply stated this way: the Father is God, and the Son is God. This paradox of high Christology frames the discourse for the rest of the letter and establishes rules for engaging further paradoxical elements in the letter.

An important concept that is woven throughout Hebrews is that redemption-history can only be understood perspectivally. What is juxtaposed throughout Hebrews are events, people, and texts. These all require interpretation or perspective. There are no neutral third-parties. Hebrews presents paradoxes based on fragments — the quotations, allusions, and echoes of the Septuagint¹⁴. Even in the Old Testament, when paradoxes are present, “what is juxtaposed is not always neat wholes, but perspectives on wholes”¹⁵. Thus, one of the epistemological presuppositions of Hebrews is that a certain perspective is required in order to understand the relationship between these fragments. Specifically, the perspective required to progress through the paradox is an intellectually robust act of

¹³ R. BAUCKHAM, “Monotheism and Christology in Hebrews 1”, *Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism* (eds. L.T. STUCKENBRUCK – W.E.S. NORTH) (JSNTSup 263; London 2004) 167–185, here 172.

¹⁴ One cannot conclude that the author did not know of the MT or another Hebrew text, only that the Septuagint possessed sufficient authority or legitimacy. A. RASCHER, *Schriftauslegung und Christologie im Hebräerbrief* (BZNW 153; Berlin 2007) 15.

¹⁵ MARAIS, *Representation in Old Testament Narrative Texts*, 172.

faith that views Jesus as equally participating in the divine identity of Israel's God.

This section focuses exclusively on the first chapter of Hebrews (1,1-14) as a literary and rhetorical unit. The discussion here is foundational because it provides an explanation for the source of paradox and locates it close to the center of how the author envisions the relationship between God and Christ. The consistent use of paradox throughout the letter suggests that the author may have intentionally framed the discourse by providing an exemplar very early in the text. The first chapter of Hebrews demonstrates that the best explanation for this literary feature of paradox originates from the author's doctrine of Christ. Indeed, if one grants the premise of Jewish monotheism as a background, it is the Son's relationship to the Father that constitutes a paradox¹⁶. The ability to resolve apparent contradictions requires a framework for understanding both God and scripture. The first chapter of Hebrews (1,1-14) provides both of these and provides the reader with a guide to engaging further paradoxes.

Before progressing with this argument about Heb 1,1-14, it will be helpful to briefly place it in relationship with the use of paradox throughout the letter. The repetition of paradox throughout the whole letter demonstrates that there was some intention on the part of the author to include them, whether he was compelled to or not. Some of the paradoxes in Hebrews include the following: (1) the "Son's superiority over angels introduces the great paradox: the glorified King was once a lowly human being"¹⁷; (2) the promised "rest" is both present and future; people enter it and must strive to enter it¹⁸; (3) the Exodus generation is an exemplar of faithfulness and faithlessness¹⁹; (4) the necessity of the morally perfect Son of God being "made perfect" through suffering in Hebrews 5; (5) the paradoxical reality of those who are first sanctified and later become apostate²⁰; (6) the paradoxical story of humanity, while consistently negative,

¹⁶ "Yet there is a paradox in Hebrews regarding the Son's relation to the Father": D.L. ALLEN, *Hebrews* (NAC; Nashville, TN 2010) 157.

¹⁷ V.C. PFITZNER, *Hebrews* (Abingdon New Testament Commentaries; Nashville 1997) 61.

¹⁸ Cited as a "paradox" by ALLEN, *Hebrews*, 529.

¹⁹ "Readers of Heb 11 have often been intrigued by a slight *non-sequitur* between the biblical record and the Author's interpretation": R. GHEORGHITA, "'He Spoke about the Exodus': Echoes of Exodus in Hebrews", *Reverberations of the Exodus in Scripture* (ed. R.M. Fox) (Eugene, OR 2014) 160-186; here 169. See also D.H. WENKEL, "Two Contrasting Portraits of the Exodus Generation in Hebrews: How Redemptive History Explains the Text", *SBET* 33 (2005) 151-162.

²⁰ "The author does not attempt to resolve or explain the paradox of those who are first sanctified and later become apostate": P. ELLINGWORTH, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids, MI 1993) 541.

still insists that Jesus is both human and yet faithful ²¹; (7) the allegorical imagery of the mountains in Hebrews 12 where Mount Zion is invisible yet approachable, and Mount Sinai is visible yet unapproachable ²². These logical tensions or paradoxes typically have to do with the use of the Old Testament (the Septuagint) ²³. This list is not exhaustive by any means, but it serves to demonstrate how paradox is an important pattern in the whole letter. As can be seen from the analysis above, apparent contradiction is established right at the beginning of the letter and developed in the context of Christology.

1. *Paradox and Christology*

The paradox that confronts the reader of the letter is the conclusion that there is equality between the Son and Father — the Son is God (θεός) and the Father is God (θεός). This paradox does not rely on an advanced formulation of the Trinity projected anachronistically on the text. This is a case of two persons having the same title of deity in a monotheistic religion. There is unity regarding their divine identity, and there are also differences with regard to their relationship. There are at least two texts in the first chapter that point to the Son's dependence on the Father ²⁴. The Father "appointed" the Son as the heir (Heb 1,2), and the Father is the one who "exalts" the Son (Heb 1,13). The Son also embodies the "radiance" of the glory of God the Father (Heb 1,3a). And the Son sits at the "right hand" of God the Father (Heb 1,3b).

But this paradox of Christology is only an apparent contradiction. The paradox has to be "apparent" if the reader of this epistle is going to proceed as an implied reader who has faith. This apparent contradiction is labelled by some as an "antinomy" ²⁵. The paradox between the Son and the Father turns on the difference between ontology and relationality. The Son is "God" (Heb 1,8) and worthy of worship. The Father is "God" and worthy of glory (Heb 1,1). If the paradox were genuinely a contradiction, then these texts would present the reader with two gods — at least a bi-theism. If the author is going to maintain any notion of God that is compatible with the monotheistic worship of YHWH, then this paradox must have some element of resolution.

²¹ "Paradoxically, the author of Hebrews insists that Jesus is both human and yet faithful": EASTER, *Faith and the Faithfulness of Jesus*, 112.

²² D.H. WENKEL, "Sensory Experience and the Contrast between the Covenants in Hebrews 12", *BibSac* 173 (2016) 219-234.

²³ FILTVEDT, *The Identity of God's People and the Paradox of Hebrews*, 2.

²⁴ ALLEN, *Hebrews*, 157.

²⁵ ALLEN, *Hebrews*, 157.

Paradox is a literary tool to confront the reader with the conclusion that God is both one and many. The author of Hebrews is not content to simply “leave” this paradox alone. He does not want the readers to think that these apparent contradictions must be left unexplained and simply ascribed to a so-called “mystery” in which there are at least two gods in the same way that there is only one god. Rather, the author encourages the reader to resolve the paradox — not completely — but partially. There are dimensions of mystery and difficulty, and the description of the Son and the Father in Hebrews 1 is indeed short. The author, then, encourages the reader to think logically about biblical theology. This conclusion stands in contrast with the following comments on the tensions in Hebrews 6 by David DeSilva:

The enterprise of biblical theology, particularly when the goal is to reduce the dynamics of a living God’s relating with his creation to a logical, systematic order, may be fundamentally at odds at this point with the creative and necessary paradoxes and tensions of living relationships ²⁶.

The first chapter of Hebrews establishes the primacy and importance of paradox, but it also draws attention to how the author wants the reader to approach them. There are indeed tensions and mysteries, but a logical and systematic order is appropriate — indeed, it is *demand*ed by the Christology. To lay aside logic would be to admit the possibility of bi-theism — an abomination to a Christian-Jew committed to the affirmation that “God is one” in the *Shema* (Deut 6,4-9).

The Christology that demands logic arguably frames the discourse for the whole letter of Hebrews. It is not only paradox that characterizes Hebrews, but a certain appeal to “rational argument” as the basis for exhortations ²⁷. As DeSilva’s quotation above demonstrates, there are implications for how one handles paradoxes as they are found throughout Hebrews. Does one approach them with “logic and systematic order”, or does one simply let them stand and avoid any attempt to “reduce the dynamics”? It is the contention of this study that the answer to this question is provided by the christological paradox presented in the first chapter. Not only is this christological paradox part of the first literary elements of the letter, but it is also of primary importance for the whole argument about the superiority of Christ.

²⁶ DESILVA, *Hebrews*, 244.

²⁷ J.W. THOMPSON, “The Appropriate, the Necessary, and the Impossible: Faith and Reason in Hebrews”, *The Early Church in Context. Essays in Honor of Everett Ferguson* (eds. A.J. MALHERBE – F.W. NORRIS – J. THOMPSON) (NovTSup 90; Leiden 1998) 302-317, here 305.

An important parallel to Hebrews occurs in Stephen's speech before his martyrdom as recorded in Acts 7,2-53. This Jewish speech from Stephen reflects the affinity for speech and homiletics as found in Hebrews. Part of Stephen's rhetorical strategy involves an opening exordium: "Brothers... listen" (Acts 7,2a)²⁸. This opening effectively "frames the discourse" for the whole debate by identifying the speech as an intra-Jewish debate²⁹. A frame for discourse establishes rules for communication with the audience. Frames of discourse create and form expectations so that the reader can follow the flow of text, the story, or the argument³⁰. In the same way, the logical demands in the christological paradox of the first chapter of Hebrews frames the discourse that follows. In other words, the demands of logic used to reconcile the divinity of the Son and the Father within Jewish monotheism provides a framework for approaching any further paradoxes that follow.

The Christology presented in the first chapter of Hebrews urges the reader to use logic to resolve *some* of the tension between the identity of the Son and the Father. This argument about the place of logic in resolving paradoxes should not be misunderstood so that *all* mystery and tension are removed. Rather, the enterprise of biblical theology as projected by the first chapter of Hebrews involves the use and pursuit of logic. This is the only way in which the Son can be God and the Father can be God without undermining the monotheistic commitments of those who claim to be faithful to YHWH.

The salient conclusion here is that the Christology presented in the first chapter of Hebrews points to a paradox that is not a genuine set of contradictions, but only two points that appear to be in tension. The tension in the first chapter of Hebrews is relieved through relationship descriptors that point to the Son's dependence upon the Father. They are both "God", yet they are relationally different as persons. There is some way in which the Son is equal to the Father yet different than the Father. This section may be summarized this way: Christology drives the author's use of paradox.

2. *Paradox and God*

Thus far, this study has demonstrated that the Christology presented by the author in the first chapter of Hebrews *demands* a certain logical

²⁸ M.C. PARSONS, *Acts* (PCNT; Grand Rapids, MI 2008) 90.

²⁹ PARSONS, *Acts*, 90.

³⁰ "Frames provide interpretive guidance or create expectations" for the audience: K.D. LITWAK, *Echoes of Scripture in Luke-Acts*. Telling the History of God's People Intertextually (JSNTSup 282; London 2005) 57.

rigor in order to maintain monotheism. Given the logical and theological premise that “God is one”, the reader simply cannot progress through the first chapter of Hebrews without considering the unity and plurality of God in some manner, even if rudimentary.

A framework for theological paradoxes (apparent contradictions) requires some rudimentary doctrine of God. This is because a true contradiction in one’s doctrine of God’s being would mean that God’s own understanding of himself or of reality is not united³¹. Ultimate contradictions in God’s character or being would mean that he could be both good and evil; light and dark. But the Christology presented in the first chapter of Hebrews presents a doctrine of God that reflects unity between the Son and the Father. The doctrine of God presented in the first chapter of Hebrews has the following three qualities:

First, God is unified in speech. God is a speaking God, and he has spoken in and through his Son (Heb 1,1)³². The opening sentence of the letter unifies God’s divine revelation of himself with what he has spoken through the prophets and through his Son. There are important theological implications that flow from the fact that all of creation is dependent upon the “word of his power” (Heb 1,3c). The salient implication for this study is that all created things are reliant upon the Son who is the instrument of God the Father’s creative intention. The Son’s “word” of power is a singular action that originates in the Father and unites the Father and Son in the act of creation.

Second, God is unified in his glory. God is characterized by “radiance” and “glory” which is manifest in his Son (Heb 1,3). There are two divine persons who are equally glorious (Heb 1,3a) and united in their nature (Heb 1,3b). Furthermore, both the Father and the Son are identified as “God” (Heb 1,1; 1,8). The concept of glory should be understood within its Jewish context and God’s glory extended to his name “YHWH”. Jesus partakes in the divine name of YHWH when he is first identified as the agent of creation (Heb 1,2) and the one identified as the “Lord” (κύριος) who “laid the foundation of the earth” (Heb 1,10).

Third, God is unified in his plurality. The opening chapter of Hebrews indicates that God the Father has spoken in the Son. This unity in plurality is approached through the concept of worship. God the Father is given the worshipful title of being “the Majesty on high” (Heb 1,3d). Likewise, of the Son, the Septuagint testifies (Deut 32,43; Ps 97,7) that all of God’s

³¹ W. GRUEDEM, *Systematic Theology*. An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine (Downers Grove, IL 2004) 35.

³² P.T. O’BRIEN, *God Has Spoken in His Son*. A Biblical Theology of Hebrews (NSBT; Downers Grove, IL 2016) 21.

angels should worship him (Heb 1.6). Both the Father and the Son are called “God” because they are united — being two persons of one God (Heb 1,1; 1,8).

3. *Paradox and Scripture*

Furthermore, a framework for paradoxes requires a doctrine of Scripture. For the author of Hebrews, the Old Testament (the Septuagint) is both the source of paradoxes and the source of texts that point to their solution(s) in Christ ³³. The logic of paradox requires a doctrine of Scripture as divine revelation. This is because a true contradiction in one’s doctrine of Scripture would mean that God’s word or communication is not *necessarily* truthful. The doctrine of Scripture is directly related to a doctrine of God if the words of Scripture are in anyway related to God’s own divine revelation of himself. The possibility of ultimate contradiction in God’s words would mean that his words could be (individually or collectively) both false and true ³⁴. The fact that the author of Hebrews utilizes the Septuagint for much of his foundational argumentation in the first chapter demonstrates that whatever logical consistency is required it is not a Greek rationalism. Rather, the logic and rational elements of the letter are related to the authority of God’s word — both Jesus and the Scriptures ³⁵. There are two assertions about the qualities of Scripture in the first chapter of Hebrews:

First, for the author of Hebrews, the Septuagint is unified with the Christology presented by the author. For the author of Hebrews, the Psalms as a whole are “songs about Christ” ³⁶. There is a unity or “essential continuity” between the “word of God in the Son” and the “word of God in the Torah” ³⁷. The catena of seven scriptural passages from the Septuagint all contribute to the same theological portrayal of Jesus’ identity. This catena of references explains why Jesus is able to serve as a high priest and save all those who come to God through him: he has taken his seat in God’s throne room ³⁸. The wide range of texts reflects the author’s view that Scriptures (the Septuagint) reflect a theological unity.

³³ For a recent discussion of the New Testament writers and the various textual forms of the Septuagint see T.M. LAW, *When God Spoke Greek*. The Septuagint and the Making of the Christian Bible (Oxford, 2013) 85-86.

³⁴ GRUDEM, *Systematic Theology*, 35.

³⁵ J. COMPTON (*Psalms 110 and the Logic of Hebrews* [LNTS 537; London 2015] 16-17) concludes: “The author everywhere grounds his argument in the Old Testament”.

³⁶ M. HENGEL, *Studies in Early Christology* (London 1995) 244.

³⁷ J.I. GRIFFITHS, *Hebrews and Divine Speech* (LNTS; London 2014) 55.

³⁸ “The climactic moment of the scene in the catena is the Father’s declaration of Jesus’ sonship as he enters into God’s throne room”: J.W. JIPP, “The Son’s Entrance into

Second, for the author of Hebrews, the Septuagint is unified by having God as its author. For the author of Hebrews, the Scriptures are the word of God. The author begins with the theological cornerstone of divine revelation: “God spoke” (Heb 1,1). God spoke through prophets, and he has spoken to us by his Son (Heb 1,1-2). For the purposes of this argument, it is important to observe that the written words of humans are treated as the words of God himself ³⁹. For example, the words of Psalm 2 are understood as divine discourse: “For to which of the angels did God ever say” (Heb 1,5). Also understood as coming from the words of God himself are the first-person statements from LXX 2 Sam 7,14 in Heb 1,5: “I will be to him a father and he shall be to me a son”. Throughout the scriptural catena in Heb 1,4-14, the author of Hebrews attributes the words of human authors to God himself. The important conclusion here is that the audience must accept the Septuagint (Old Testament) as “divinely revealed” if the exegetical proofs are to be persuasive ⁴⁰.

II. PARADOX ELICITS AN INTELLECTUAL FAITH

This study has established one point thus far: paradox frames the discourse of Heb 1,1-14. But why paradox? It is proposed that the answer to this question is that paradox elicits an act of intellectually robust faith. This intellectual aspect of faith must wrestle with the difficulties of integrating Jesus into the divine identity of the one true God of Israel ⁴¹. Paradox simply requires action on the part of the audience. According to this view, the Letter to the Hebrews employs paradox in the service of pastoral theology: to encourage the weak and warn those who are flirting with apostasy. From a phenomenological perspective, paradoxes are rhetorical devices that exert pressure upon the reader to utilize logic and to re-consider previously established conclusions. The results of this are

the Heavenly World: The Soteriological Necessity of the Scriptural Catena in Hebrews 1,5-14” *NTS* 56 (2010) 557-575, here 559.

³⁹ “He [the author] makes no distinction between the word written and the word spoken, and treats the words of human authors as the words of God”: D.G. PETERSON, “God and Scripture in Hebrews”, *The Trustworthiness of God*. Perspectives on the Nature of Scripture (eds. P. HELM – C. TRUEMAN) (Leicester 2002) 118-138, here 121.

⁴⁰ COMPTON, *Psalm 110 and the Logic of Hebrews*, 17.

⁴¹ For comparison, C. Tilling argues that the “relational data concerning Christ in Paul’s letters corresponds, as a pattern, only to the language concerning YHWH in second Temple Judaism. It is concluded that the Christ-relation is Paul’s divine-Christology expressed as relationship”: C. TILLING, *Paul’s Divine Christology* (Grand Rapids, MI 2012, repr. 2015) 3. For comments supporting Tilling’s thesis, see N.T. WRIGHT, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*. Vol. 4, Christian Origins and the Question of God (Minneapolis, MN 2013) 651.

either renewed minds ready for faith-full action, or frustrated minds incapable of moving through the apparent contradiction with any resolution at all.

The implicit acts of an intellectually robust faith are evident by considering the following propositions in relation to Christ, God, and the Scripture. One of the clues that the concept of faith is operative in Heb 1,1-14 even without being linguistically present is that the author makes assertions about what is unseen. The famous list of biblical heroes in Hebrews 11 opens with the statement that faith is “[...] the conviction of things not seen” (Heb 11,1). It requires an element of faith in the unseen to accept that the Son created the world and is the one of whom Ps 102,25-27 speaks: “You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning” (Heb 1,10). Likewise, it requires an element of faith to accept that Jesus is “the radiance of the glory of God” (Heb 1,2). And it takes faith to believe that what the prophets such as Moses wrote in the Pentateuch (“Let all God’s angel’s worship him” in Deut 32,43) means that the Son is equally worthy of worship as the Father.

We turn now to the question: What is the author doing with what he is saying in the first chapter? The theological and christological depth of the first chapter should not distract the modern reader from the deeply pastoral goals of the letter. The larger pattern consisting of exposition and hortatory sections points to pastoral intentions. The author is *doing* something pastorally with what he is saying. The point I want to make in this section is based on all of the material about Christology, God, and Scripture covered thus far. The point is that the author elicits an act of intellectually robust faith on the part of the reader through the argumentation in Heb 1,1-14. The argumentation in the first chapter of Hebrews does nothing less than call for implicit acts of faith in relation to Christ, God, and the Scriptures⁴². This is evident in the fact that, if the reader, who, we assume, holds to Judaic monotheism, cannot tolerate the Son as part of the divine identity of YHWH, then the rest of what follows concerning Jesus’ Melchizedekian priesthood is inconsequential.

This intellectual aspect of faith is similar to the concept of intellectual faith recognized in Heb 11,6: “And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists”⁴³.

⁴² The implicit nature of faith in this argument relies on “faith” being present as a concept, even where the word “faith” does not appear. For a similar suggestion that faith is “embedded throughout the epistle”, see V. RHEE, *Faith in Hebrews*. Analysis within the Context of Christology, Eschatology, and Ethics (StBL 19; New York 2001) 62.

⁴³ H. LÖHR (*Umkehr und Sünde im Hebräerbrief* [BZNW 73; Berlin 1994] 96) comments that ‘der intellektuelle Aspekt der πίστις’ is found in Heb 11,6.

What is significant about the argumentation about God, Christ, and the Scriptures in Heb 1,1-14 is that the author has already laid the foundation for this explicit call to belief in Hebrews 11. What is explicit in the central to later part of the letter was already implicit in the beginning.

These points, mentioned above, contribute to a more robust model of what “faith” means according to the author of Hebrews. The concept of “faith” in Hebrews has been defined as “the prerequisite for the proper relationship to God”⁴⁴. And recent studies have rightly defined “faith” in Hebrews as having Jesus as both the “model and object” of faith⁴⁵. Faith in Hebrews is multi-dimensional, encompassing the eschatological and the ethical⁴⁶. But faith also does something in conjunction with logic: faith reasons about Christ in relation to God according to the Scriptures. Negatively, M.C. Easter’s study concludes that apostasy is not “simply intellectual doubt” but an abandoning of the New Covenant community⁴⁷. But this may push the aspect of intellectual understanding too far away. An inability to work through the inclusion of Jesus in the divine identity of God may not necessarily be apostasy proper, but it is certainly incompatible with salvation based on Jesus’ superior priesthood (see, e.g., Heb 7,25).

This study puts the definition of “faith” according to Hebrews a little closer to Philo’s definition of “faith”, but only with respect to its intellectual nature⁴⁸. Philo is significant for the Letter to the Hebrews, not because of his direct influence, but because of the opportunity to compare and contrast similar terminology. Philo’s use of faith language (πίστις and πιστεύειν) reflected his unique synthesis of his Jewish heritage and his Hellenistic Greek education⁴⁹. For example, Philo interprets Abraham’s faith as a reward for virtue in *De praem* 27⁵⁰. However, Philo’s view of faith is unlike that of Hebrews in that “faith” is a crowning virtue and even an “intellectual superstition”⁵¹. As for Philo, so also for the author of Hebrews, “faith” acts through thinking logically and systematically.

⁴⁴ D.R. LINDSAY, “*Pistis* and ‘*Emunah*’: The Nature of Faith in the Epistle to the Hebrews”, in R. BAUCKHAM et al. (eds.), *A Cloud of Witnesses. The Theology of Hebrews in its Ancient Contexts* (London 2008) 158-169, here 163.

⁴⁵ RHEE, *Faith in Hebrews*, xv.

⁴⁶ E. GRÄSSER, *Der Glaube im Hebräerbrief* (MThSt 2; Marburg 1965) 66-68.

⁴⁷ EASTER, *Faith and the Faithfulness of Jesus in Hebrews*, 212.

⁴⁸ Contra LINDSAY, “*Pistis* and ‘*Emunah*’”, 163.

⁴⁹ “It is indeed a synthesis, but it is more than a synthesis, so that it is appropriate to speak of a Philonic concept of faith”: D.R. LINDSAY, *Josephus and Faith. Pistis and Pisteuein as Faith Terminology in the Writings of Flavius Josephus and in the New Testament* (AGAJU 19; Leiden 1993) 73.

⁵⁰ WILLIAMSON, *Philo and Hebrews*, 360.

⁵¹ LINDSAY, *Josephus and Faith*, 71; similarly, WILLIAMSON, *Philo and Hebrews*, 350.

But in Hebrews, this faith is able to reason through the process that concludes that Jesus participates in the “unique divine identity” of the God of Israel ⁵². Faith is able to partially resolve the paradoxes that would otherwise leave those who are unbelieving with no other choice but to throw up their hands and “shrink back” (Heb 10,39).

The theological concept of “faith” in Hebrews generally has four dimensions: (1) christological, (2) ethical, (3) eschatological, and (4) ecclesiological ⁵³. The christological aspect is related to Jesus as the object of faith. The ethical aspect is about obedience, endurance, and perseverance. The eschatological aspect is about faith directed toward a future unseen world that God will ultimately reveal, including the resurrection from the dead ⁵⁴. The ecclesiological aspect of faith is the communal and corporate contributions. To this is added another dimension that might be labeled: (5) participatory ⁵⁵. What M. C. Easter’s study adds to this list is the importance of Jesus’ own faithfulness as it relates to human beings and to the glory that is intended for them (e.g. Ps 8,4-6 in Heb 2,5-9). What this current study on paradox in Heb 1,1-14 does is suggest that there is an element of subjective intellectual faith that happens logically prior to the implied reader’s participation in Christ who was the faithful human par-excellence. There is an element of intellectual faith about the person and work of Christ — specifically his participation in the divine identity of YHWH. This might also be stated in this way: belief in Jesus is entirely consistent with the *Shema*. Thus, the relation of the elements that frame the discourse to the more advanced ideas in Hebrews is one of moving from faith to faith.

This analysis of paradox in Heb 1,1-14 leads to the conclusion that for the author of Hebrews the audience needs to move from “faith to faith”. There must be a movement from the logic of elementary Christology to other more mature dynamics of faith ⁵⁶. The importance of logic in regard

⁵² The passage of Hebrews 1 “employs all the key features by which Jewish monotheism standardly characterized the uniqueness of God in order to include Jesus within the unique divine identity”: R. BAUCKHAM, *God Crucified*. Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI 1998) 33-34.

⁵³ This section and the four aspects of faith are heavily dependent upon EASTER, *Faith and the Faithfulness of Jesus in Hebrews*, 11-12.

⁵⁴ Hebrews 11 offers an escalating series of salvation-historical events that find resolution in the resurrection of Jesus (see Heb 13,20). See D.H. WENKEL, “Abraham’s Typological Resurrection from the Dead in Hebrews 11”, *Criswell Theological Review* 15 (2018) 51-66, here 53.

⁵⁵ For EASTER’s comments on his view of faith in relation to “participation” in Paul, see *Faith and the Faithfulness of Jesus in Hebrews*, 107-108.

⁵⁶ This mature and informed faith finds expression in Heb 10,22-23: “let us draw near with a true heart in *fullness of faith*” (similarly Heb 6,11).

to faith stands in contrast with the position of R. Williamson: “If rational processes of thought are involved where faith is concerned, they follow upon faith but do not lead to it” ⁵⁷. But they need to begin with faith — that is, a faith that rightly identifies the person and work of Jesus. The author of Hebrews does address the audience as having “intellectual lethargy”, even while remaining optimistic about the knowledge of faith ⁵⁸. In Hebrews, faith does indeed lead to more faith. But this intellectual side of faith does not mean that the author envisions faith as a “process of sophisticated intellectual reflection” ⁵⁹. Rather, it means accepting the Scriptures by faith as the very words of God — the divine discourse that testifies to the person and work of Jesus. With regard to the intellectual nature of faith in Hebrews 1,1-14, the important point is to maintain a balance between two extremes: being utterly simplistic and being overly sophisticated.

III. PARADOX AND THE PURPOSES OF HEBREWS

The opening chapter of Hebrews (1,1-14) provides a unique theological portrait of the Father and Son, followed by a string of quotations from the Septuagint. This article argues that one of the things that the author is doing is intentionally portraying Christology through apparent paradox. To be clear, this initial paradox of high Christology in Hebrews 1 does not determine the contents of the entire letter; rather, it draws attention to an overlooked rhetorical feature that appears in certain locations. The pattern guides the reader about how they should pursue further paradoxes within the letter whenever they appear. This framework of paradoxical Christology was not theology for theology’s sake, but for pastoral purposes that reflect some of the wider patterns of early Christian discourse.

The passage of Heb 1,1-14 may indeed be described as “theology in the service of exhortation” ⁶⁰. The message of Hebrews might be described as “anti-assimilation” ⁶¹. This letter urged resistance against the lures of the

⁵⁷ R. WILLIAMSON, *Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Leiden 1970) 367.

⁵⁸ K. BACKHAUS, *Der sprechende Gott*. Gesammelte Studien zum Hebräerbrief (WUNT 2/240; Tübingen 2009) 79.

⁵⁹ WILLIAMSON, *Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews*, 367.

⁶⁰ PETERSON, “God and Scripture in Hebrews”, 118.

⁶¹ “Hebrews appears to have much in common with Revelation’s anti-assimilation message”: J.A. WHITLARK, *Resisting Empire*. Rethinking the Purpose of the Letter to the Hebrews (LNTS; London 2014) 193-194.

imperial culture ⁶². Or, more traditionally, it urged resistance against a “Judaized” (i.e., overly conservative) form of Christianity ⁶³. As a whole, the Letter to the Hebrews urges its readers to “embrace shame, suffering, even death that loyalty to Christ and his people might provoke” ⁶⁴. To this end, paradox enabled the author to write with a pastoral perspective or slant. It enabled the author to encourage and warn by engaging the intellectual dimensions of faith. This is not all that Hebrews has to say about faith, but it represents, nonetheless, an important dimension of faith. It has been argued in this study that one of the features of this theological agenda is paradox which elicits an intellectually engaged faith.

First, paradox served pastoral purposes. The identity of the audience is largely inconsequential for this study. They may have been converted non-Jews who had received some instruction in a synagogue ⁶⁵. Or they may have been a mixed audience of Jews and Gentiles, with a predominately Jewish contingent. The audience had come to believe that Jesus was the Messiah of Israel. That is simple enough. The sudden appearance of Jesus — the Messiah of Israel — forced all those who believed that this was true to wrestle with a wide range of theological matters. One of the most prominent matters was that of monotheism. How could Jesus be identical to YHWH and yet be different from YHWH? As R. Bauckham explains: “All that remained was to *work through* consistently what it could mean for Jesus to belong integrally to the unique identity of the one God” ⁶⁶. But that act of “working through” Jesus’ identity is something that required an intellectual and logical faith. This elementary act of faith grows from “faith to faith” by participating in Christ’s faith. But the point must not be missed: the paradox of Christology frames the discourse because it elicits an act of intellectually engaging faith. In other words, the literary and rhetorical technique of paradox in Heb 1,1-12 supports the pastoral objectives of the letter.

Second, paradox was integral to early Christian discourse. The view of paradox that is central to the argument in this study is that early Christianity had its own “discourse”. The language of paradox is neither a flight from the vernacular of the day nor a dialect of *arcana* ⁶⁷. This

⁶² “Eschatological salvation cannot be experienced without resisting the lures and pressures of the imperial culture”: WHITLARK, *Resisting Empire*, 194.

⁶³ COMPTON, *Psalms 110 and the Logic of Hebrews*, 14.

⁶⁴ WHITLARK, *Resisting Empire*, 195.

⁶⁵ FILTVEDT, *The Identity of God’s People and the Paradox of Hebrews*, 18, who remains undecided about identity of the audience as the text is silent on the matter (p. 22).

⁶⁶ BAUCKHAM, “Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism”, 168 (emphasis mine).

⁶⁷ A.N. WILDER, *Early Christian Rhetoric*. The Language of the Gospel (1964; repr. Eugene, OR 2014) 18.

early Christian discourse utilized “linguistic conventions of ancient Greek and Roman persuasive discourse” for its own purposes ⁶⁸. The historical argument for the presence of Christian discourse is simply its survival and, indeed, its success as a religion in the pluralism that was the Roman empire of the first century C.E. Christianity had a simple message about the bodily resurrection of Jesus from the dead. This was a central feature of the Christian gospel, and it was identified by Paul as an event of “first” importance (see 1 Corinthians 15). But this simple message was not always packaged simplistically. The earliest Christian discourse developed because it made an extraordinary historical claim about Jesus’ resurrection and because it was extraordinarily exclusive. Everywhere it went, the discourse was forged in the midst of conflict. The message of Christianity simply “could not exist without critiquing, and ultimately defeating, other types of discourse” ⁶⁹. This study adds to the broader discussion of early Christian discourse by pointing to the importance of paradox. A prominent feature of this discourse was apparent contradictions that found some measure of logical resolution while also allowing for a measure of tension and mystery.

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SUMMARY

Commentators have occasionally observed the presence of paradoxes in the Letter to the Hebrews. But the use of paradox has not been recognized as an integral part of the rhetorical techniques used to encourage and challenge the reader. In this essay I argue that paradox is an important rhetorical feature of Hebrews 1,1-14 which elicits an intellectually engaging act of faith on the part of the reader. This act of faith is implicit rather than explicit, but it is required to accept the author’s statements about Christ, God, and the Scriptures.

⁶⁸ M.V. NOVENSON, “The Panegyric to the Hebrews: A Response to Amy Peeler”, *Koinonia* 20 (2008) 27-33, here 32.

⁶⁹ B. WITHERINGTON III, *New Testament Rhetoric*. An Introductory Guide (Eugene, OR 2009) 248.

RECENSIONES

Vetus Testamentum

Graeme AULD, *Life in Kings*. Reshaping the Royal Story in the Hebrew Bible (Ancient Israel and its Literature 31). Atlanta, SBL Press, 2017. viii-333 p. 15 × 23. \$39.95

In *Life in Kings* Graeme Auld furthers his text-historical line of argument begun in his earlier work *Kings without Privilege*. David and Moses in the Story of the Bible's Kings (Edinburgh 1994). His main argument pertains to the shared or "synoptic" texts of Samuel-Kings and Chronicles: these shared portions originally comprised (the main part of) a common source document (which Auld calls the "Book of Two Houses"), which was then independently reworked and developed further by both traditions. In other words, the synoptic portions would contain the oldest retrievable textual layer in Samuel-Kings-Chronicles. With this view Auld openly challenges the widely assumed model that the Chronicler worked with some form of the books of Samuel-Kings as his source, as originally proposed by M.L. de Wette. Even though the book furthers the argument of his earlier works, especially *Kings without Privilege*, Auld contends that *Life in Kings* is to be considered "quite independent of that earlier monograph" (21).

After a brief history of research, Auld furthers his argument by several careful case studies of vocabulary and grammar. In the second chapter of the book, Auld discusses the use of the term "life/live/living" (חַי) in Samuel-Kings-Chronicles, noting a curious phenomenon: in Chronicles and the synoptic portions the theme of "life" is quite scant, while elsewhere in Samuel-Kings the usage of the word root is very common. Auld therefore asks: why would this word be so rarely used exactly in the portions "quoted" by the Chronicler? Is it likely that the Chronicler would have left so many instances of "living" out of the text, if he were using Samuel-Kings as his base text, as is commonly thought?

This theme is then developed in the study of several other words, where the same phenomenon seems to take place: while the word "day" (יוֹם), for instance, is used some 24 times in the synoptic portions, Samuel-Kings uses the word elsewhere remarkably more often, altogether 210 times. Similar results emerge in the study of five other words/phrases found or not found in the synoptic tradition (יָשׁ, יהוה, נָאֵם, בֵּרַךְ, אֶךְ, הִנֵּה), and one grammatical form, i.e., the use of absolute infinitive. While rare in Chronicles, the absolute infinitive is used by Samuel-Kings more often even in the synoptic portions. Auld concludes that, instead of the Chronicler omitting infinitives, Samuel-Kings has in fact secondarily added them even to its shared text. These word studies constitute the main argument of the book.

After these studies, Auld proceeds in chapters 4–9 to examine the broader themes of the synoptic text form, aiming to show both that the shared material is distinct from the rest of the materials, and that there was already a certain coherence between

the materials of the common source text. A few examples will suffice. Auld notes the recurrent theme of God-King communication in the material, which in the case of David and Solomon is furthermore unmediated. Similarly, the word “place” (מָקוֹם) refers in the synoptic material always to a place where divine power is somehow invested. In the non-synoptic portions the use is more varied. Since the narratives and themes in the non-synoptic portions have been mostly created and taken over from the synoptic portions (concerning both Judah and Israel, where also certain kings had to be invented for Kings), the common theme of “high places” (בָּמוֹת) in Kings can also be seen as rising from the few places where they are mentioned in the synoptic material. In this way the author(s) of Kings strived to highlight the sinfulness of the people, and not only of the kings, as is still the case in the synoptic material.

The third main theme of the book is the comparison of the three different Hezekiah narratives in 2 Kings 18–20/Isaiah 36–39/2 Chronicles 32 in chapter 10. In this narrative Kings shows again a clear interest in the word “life”, while in (the synoptic) Chronicles the word is not used at all. Since in Chronicles the involvement of Isaiah is minimal, Auld argues that the Isaiah-Kings tradition has enhanced his role greatly in a later development. This development was especially modeled after the synoptic Micaiah (1 Kings 22) and Huldah (2 Kings 23) stories.

After a brief summary in chapter 11, a lengthy sample of the synoptic text is given, together with a helpful commentary on the texts in question.

A reader who comes to the book without previous knowledge of Auld’s work may feel somewhat overwhelmed, since both the methodology of the book and, more importantly, its specific aim are only briefly summarized before delving into the discussion about the lexicographical differences between the synoptic and non-synoptic portions of the text. The book could have thus profited from a bit more in-depth introduction.

Auld’s theory is bold, and it goes, for the most part, against the main lines of current research. For example, in current scholarship 2 Samuel 24 is almost universally seen as a late addition to the book. However, since this material is mostly shared by Chronicles, Auld argues that this section, in fact, is part of the very *oldest* material preserved in the books. Overall, Auld’s idea that most of the non-synoptic text has been somehow created on the basis of the synoptic portions is not easy to defend. The arguments posited for literary dependence of these materials seem in many cases somewhat far-fetched, and shared vocabulary between these portions is scarcely definitive proof of dependence. While highly intriguing, the lexical evidence provided by Auld is far from compelling, since some of the words (יֵשׁ, יְהוּה, נִיר) are quite rare to begin with. For such a radical theory one would wish for more substantial evidence to be presented. One of the two non-synoptic mentions of נִיר in 1 Kgs 15,4 is even text-critically suspect, as it is missing from the (likely more original) Septuagint.

Indeed, as a text-critic myself, my main criticism pertains to Auld’s (lack of) text-critical work. While it is highly commendable that Auld quite often takes notice of and even uses readings of the Septuagint (especially in his commentary of the shared text), and that such names as Julio Trebolle and Adrian Schenker are mentioned (albeit briefly) in the introduction of the book, in practice his use of textual witnesses other than MT remains minimal. Indeed, there is “a rule observed in this study, of arguing routinely on the basis of data shared in Samuel-Kings (MT) and Chronicles (MT)” (41). This is methodologically somewhat surprising, however,

since Auld (208) himself alludes to the following statement of Trebolle: “Chronicles knew a text of Samuel-Kings different from that of the MT in these books and similar to that attested by 4QSama (4Q51), the Old Greek, the Old Latin and Josephus (Cross, Ulrich)” (J. Trebolle, “Kings (MT/LXX) and Chronicles: The Double and Triple Textual Tradition”, *Reflection and Refraction*. FS G. Auld [eds. R. Rezetko – T. Lim – B. Aucker] [Leiden 2007] 483-501). A serious discussion of the Septuagint’s readings is therefore imperative when talking about textual — and thus also redactional — issues of Samuel-Kings-Chronicles.

It is then somewhat unfortunate that the text-critical challenge has not been taken up as readily as one would hope. This is, in fact, not simply an insignificant methodological trifle, but in the context of Kings — the book that contains the hardest text-critical problems in the whole Hebrew Bible — an extremely important and meaningful enterprise. The question pertains to the very text we are using for our reconstructions! Not only is there a high probability that the Masoretic text might oftentimes be secondary to the witness of the Septuagint — as is readily acknowledged by Auld — but it seems probable that the Masoretic text has, in fact, gone through later revision(s) that were not shared by the Septuagint’s Hebrew base text. This has been argued by some of the most prominent text-critical scholars of Kings, most importantly by the aforementioned Schenker and Trebolle. This is quite nicely illustrated by the synoptic 1 Kgs 8,1-5 (=2 Chr 5,2-6), for which Auld (208-209) commendably uses the Septuagint’s witness to argue that the Levites in verse 4 have been taken over to the MT’s text from Chronicles. The textual evidence could at some points even support Auld’s claims. It is nevertheless clear in our post-Qumran age that redactional theories (or *any* theories in general) can hardly be based on one textual tradition only.

It is also somewhat surprising to note that, despite Samuel-Kings being possibly the most prolific playground for literary critical study, literary critical research, as well as the method itself, is for the most part not discussed in the book. Despite his diachronic theory, Auld seems to consider the non-synoptic text practically in a synchronic manner, without taking into account the many different hands that have worked on the texts for centuries, on many different grounds. Quite a few of these (scribe-)editors would not likely have been in any way interested in (and, even less so, aware of) the putative synoptic source propagated by Auld.

Indeed, knowing the complex entanglement of different texts and traditions in the Qumran manuscripts, one may ask whether even the commendably original proposition of Auld’s goes far enough: it may well be that the question of the relationship of Samuel-Kings-Chronicles (similar to the case of Kings and Deuteronomy) is even messier than we would at the moment like to concede. While Auld only briefly touches on the issue of the Qumran discoveries, the many techniques of rewriting and re-interpretation evidenced by the Dead Sea scrolls could prove quite useful for his argument — or at least they are at the moment used to support the mainstream view: the Chronicler as the “rewriter” of earlier material.

Life in Kings serves as a great reminder to scholars that the text of Chronicles is an important witness to the textual evolution of Samuel-Kings — one cannot simply overlook it as only a late text. There are often cases to be found where Chronicles likely attests to the earliest text form, which is now somehow altered in Samuel-Kings. Those sympathetic to Auld’s position will likely find many new, and certainly interesting, notions and remarks in the book. Nevertheless, despite

his many intriguing and important findings, it seems doubtful that Auld will be able to convince many of the proponents of the current scholarly consensus with the arguments compiled in *Life in Kings*.

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Timo TEKONIEMI

Roy L. HELLER, *The Characters of Elijah and Elisha and the Deuteronomic Evaluation of Prophecy*. Miracles and Manipulation (Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 671). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2018. xii-250 p. 16 × 24. £50.99.

No es frecuente encontrar monografías sobre las narraciones de Elías y Eliseo, pues más bien se suelen tratar en los comentarios a los libros de los Reyes. Roy H. Heller, profesor de la Perkins School of Theology en la Southern Methodist University ofrece al lector la oportunidad de contemplar este ciclo de relatos proféticos desde una perspectiva narrativa. Otras publicaciones suyas, siempre en clave narrativa, son: *Narrative Structure and Discourse Constellations*. An Analysis of Clause Function in Biblical Hebrew Prose (HSS 55; Winona Lake, IN 2004) y *Power, Politics, and Prophecy*. The Character of Samuel and the Deuteronomic Evaluation of Prophecy (LHB/OTS 440; New York 2006).

La presente obra se divide en cuatro capítulos, amén de la bibliografía y los índices de referencia y autores. Empieza con una introducción que versa sobre la ambigüedad de la profecía, el criterio deuteronómico de la misma y las incidencias que tal criterio ejerce sobre los episodios de Elías y Eliseo. El lector se halla ante una obra bien estructurada, tejida a tenor de la actividad profética de Elías y Eliseo en los libros de los Reyes. El texto bíblico se sigue con rigor y no se crean vacíos en su exposición. Es un estudio sistemático y la reflexión del autor destaca por su solidez. En este sentido su lectura compensa. Heller nunca se escabulle a la hora de cotejar la narraciones. Es de agradecer su gran interés por seguir el texto y no alejarse de él en ningún momento.

En el cap. 1, dedicado a la profecía y su ambigüedad, el autor proporciona los presupuestos que sostienen el enfoque de su obra. Insiste en el lenguaje en cuanto medio para concretar el mensaje divino y, al mismo tiempo, en los signos realizados para avalarlo en numerosas ocasiones. Observamos, por otro lado, que es parco en el uso de textos bíblicos. Se limita a Jer 1,4-40; 23,16 y enfatiza la importancia de Dt 13,1-6 y 18,5-22, que serán el eje coordinador a la hora de enjuiciar respectivamente la actividad de Elías y Eliseo. Ya aquí subraya la dimensión y naturaleza de la ambigüedad del fenómeno profético, aportando una bibliografía reciente al respecto (4-6). Hay que decir que privilegia el envoltorio retórico a la hora de contar las vivencias proféticas, en este caso de Elías y Eliseo. Pasa de puntillas sobre Samuel, lo cual es comprensible, ya que no será objeto de sus reflexiones en el cuerpo del libro.

En la introducción del capítulo el autor adelanta ya sus intenciones. Habida cuenta que en los últimos veinte años los relatos sobre Elías y Eliseo han sido explorados en varios modos, por una parte, insiste en su aspecto histórico y, por otra, opta por abrir los relatos a variadas lecturas. Este segundo acercamiento subraya la riqueza

y complejidad de los mensajes proféticos y, en concreto, de las figuras de Elías y Eliseo. Heller se fija atentamente en la caracterización de los profetas, lo cual hace que la vivencia profética sea pura y transparente, sin adulteración alguna. Esta técnica literaria casi siempre la considera en su complejidad y a veces saca a flote sus contradicciones o vacíos. Dicho brevemente, los relatos sobre Elías y Eliseo presentan un carácter ambiguo y variado, lo que configura la actividad de ambos personajes. Y, según Heller, no se trata sólo de un recurso literario, sino de un modo de entender la profecía y la dinámica de la palabra divina.

El autor ofrece una síntesis del recurso a la ambigüedad en la literatura profana, cifrada en siete modalidades (9). Bebiendo en la literatura de lengua inglesa — echamos de menos la alusión a estudios en otras lenguas a lo largo de sus reflexiones —, aboga por la comprensión del texto en su fluctuación para evitar ciertos dogmatismos interpretativos y se inclina por una dimensión pluralista del mismo. Heller concreta su método: una lectura ambigua de los rasgos de Elías y Eliseo en su mensaje profético; un mensaje que es unas veces claro, otras negativo u opaco a tenor de los relatos (16). La clave de su lectura se encuentra en Deuteronomio 13 y 18, código identificador del profetismo en Israel para la praxis de los mediadores. Estas referencias bíblicas (las únicas que el autor considera) ayudan a discernir las intenciones de los dos profetas en cuestión a la hora de juzgar su comportamiento.

Con una pincelada evoca la figura de Samuel, en cuanto que encaja también en este perfil de ambigüedad, es decir, lo ve como una personalidad compleja, donde confluyen también varias facetas de su conducta, a saber, si fue fiel o no a Dios en su oficio profético. Al hilo de la evocación de los mediadores conviene subrayar que el autor se limita a citar algunos textos, pero sin argumentar sobre cuándo se escribieron, a qué estrato veterotestamentario pertenecen, qué causas impulsaron su creación, entre otras cosas. Se ofusca en buscar un perfil ético para juzgar los relatos sin más complicaciones.

En estos enfoques iniciales Heller asienta las bases para luego adentrarse en el análisis de la conciencia profética de Elías y Eliseo en busca de una conformidad con la voluntad divina. Dicho diversamente, el autor se pregunta en qué medida Elías y Eliseo se dejan condicionar por la presencia divina en su conciencia, o, por el contrario, si su protagonismo personal asoma en las circunstancias históricas, empapadas de intenciones interesadas en la forma de manejar el contenido del mensaje.

Ambos profetas administran el mensaje según su sensibilidad, buscándose a sí mismos, manipulando la palabra, mostrándose orgullosos, desabridos, insensibles y crueles; a veces, ingeniosos administradores, obtusos, favoreciendo suspicacias y engaños, procurando su seguridad y el control de la vida social y religiosa de Israel. Las descripciones de sus comportamientos ayudan a descubrir sus núcleos éticos. Cuando Elías y Eliseo son coherentes y fieles al mensaje divino son definidos como mediadores auténticos, y el texto lo confirma.

Podríamos decir que en estos relatos se desvelan los mecanismos antropológicos y proféticos ante la palabra divina, que llega puntual y con el afán de iluminar la vida de Israel. Frente a las fórmulas lapidarias características del profetismo posterior, aquí emerge sin rubor la acogida de las intenciones divinas y, en este sentido, es sugerente y apasionante comprobar la conciencia profética a la intemperie, menos filtrada por las tradiciones bíblicas. En este sentido la obra rompe moldes. En realidad, el autor se ciñe a los relatos en su actual disposición en el

texto sagrado. No se detiene en las estructuras del mismo, sino que lee el contenido, buscando la acogida profética de la palabra. Se contenta con señalar las unidades para una lectura continuada.

El cap. 2 se focaliza en torno a Elías y sus historias: entre otras, los acontecimientos del monte Carmelo, la teofanía en el monte Horeb, el encuentro con Eliseo, la viña de Nabot y la enfermedad de Ocozías. Heller proporciona una evaluación del carácter de Elías, que constantemente desvela un perfil ambiguo (110-111). A veces se ajusta al modelo mosaico de profeta, es decir, obedece a Dios y su obediencia se refleja en su comportamiento. Así, se deja alimentar por los cuervos en el torrente Querit (1 Reyes 17), conduce a Israel a confesar a Dios (1 Reyes 18), pronuncia un juicio de condena como consecuencia del asesinato de Nabot, provocando el arrepentimiento de Ajab (1 Reyes 21). Este retrato de Elías refleja un claro perfil mosaico — el profeta habla y actúa como el mediador por antonomasia — y el recurso a dicciones, frases y teología deuteronomicas avala esta óptica. Otras veces, sin embargo, se mueve autónomamente y ocasiona la lluvia sin mediar una palabra de explicación (1 Reyes 17), desvela su mal humor y es testarudo; cual anti-Moisés (1 Reyes 19), no obedece inmediatamente para ungir a Hazael o Jehú, busca su engrandecimiento o huye de su responsabilidad personal. Además, se muestra atento a la viuda una vez que ésta le ha obsequiado, o admite secretamente su ignorancia sobre las acciones divinas o intenciones de la mujer (1 Reyes 17). En pocas palabras, el profeta Elías desvela un carácter contradictorio y complejo a la sombra de la palabra de Dios, aunque no de modo absoluto. La reticencia frente a la misma asoma y salpica intermitentemente sus acciones y gestos.

El cap. 3 se ocupa de los relatos sobre Eliseo, que confluyen en 2 Reyes 2–13. El autor adopta una metodología similar, previamente anunciada (111). En las historias de Eliseo se desvela también el carácter ambiguo del profeta. Aparecerá en un doble perfil, fuerte y débil. Por una parte, se mantiene firme contra la corrupción de las estructuras políticas, y les ofrece su ayuda, proclamando la palabra de Dios y aportando la propia, pero por otra deja entrever un carácter esquivo, propio de alguien del cual uno no se puede fiar completamente. Heller sintetiza sus conclusiones: si Elías mostraba un carácter inestable, su discípulo se muestra aún más opaco en sus acciones y aventuras (206-215).

El cap. 4, recogiendo los resultados desglosados en las narraciones, funciona como una valoración conjunta y concreta del pensamiento del autor. Se trata de un ensayo que mira los textos bíblicos con el prisma del método narrativo, lo que ciertamente aporta sus enfoques enriquecedores. Heller busca una sincronización de los relatos, pero deja en la penumbra una serie de interrogantes que aclararían otros aspectos. Se echa de menos una inquietud por la historia de la formación literaria de las unidades, las dependencias terminológicas, las influencias de otros enfoques teológicos, v. gr. el estrato deuteronomístico, el encaje en el libro de los Reyes, el fenómeno del sincretismo religioso, la sedimentación de las tradiciones a nivel literario... Partiendo de la premisa inicial, es decir, la ambigüedad de la profecía, la aplica los textos. El juicio, muy sumario, sobre la actividad profética de Samuel no entra en las confluencias de las tradiciones antiguas sobre la misma. Idéntico fenómeno ocurre con los textos de Dt 13,1-6 y 18,5-22, tomados como parámetros para discernir las intenciones de los planes y palabras proféticas de Elías y Eliseo. El autor los acepta como referencia, sin aportar razones que avalen su decisión.

El lector puede contemplar, en definitiva, un enfoque unitario sobre Elías y Eliseo a nivel de caracterización de ambos personajes a la luz de la palabra divina y la acogida de la misma con criterios uniformadores. Ciertamente, la obra de Keller resulta sugerente y favorece una óptica complementaria a otros estudios que a veces adolecen de un enfoque unidimensional. En este sentido aporta aire fresco a la hora de situarse ante las narraciones en cuestión. Esta es su novedad.

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Alma BRODERSEN, *The End of the Psalter*. Psalms 146–150 in the Masoretic Text, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the Septuagint (Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 505). Berlin, Walter de Gruyter, 2017. x-321 p. 16 × 23.5. €99,95

Life's sequence "to plant and to pluck up what is planted" (Qoh 3,2) also applies, in a way, to the duration of exegetical theories. Alma Brodersen, in her Oxford dissertation (oriented by John Barton) definitely is on the destruction team of a long-time preferred mode of holistic, canonic interpretation of the Psalter, pioneered by Gerald Wilson, Erich Zenger, Matthias Millard and others. They postulated the final Psalms 146–150 to be a carefully knit literary unit of akin poems serving to bring to a congenial close that wondrously composed *book* of Psalms. Brodersen, for her part, distrusts this thesis from the beginning: "... the unity of Psalms 146–150 is not obvious" (1). She gives her main reasons in the "Introduction" (1–30). Canonical interpreters start out from a dogmatically defended assumption that the Masoretic text of the Psalms (as of other parts of the Hebrew Bible) represents the exclusive, and authentic original. More ancient copies, like fragments of Dead Sea Scrolls, and versions, like the Septuagint, must be, according to this view, less trustworthy derivations from (hypothetical!) Ur-Masoretic configurations (11–21). With the backing of Emmanuel Tov our author declares: "I read the text forms separately", that is, in their own rights (19). To admit independent traditions of the Psalter is the end of any theory imposing a unified composition on the last five songs, because Dead Sea fragments and Septuagint translation deviate so much from any imagined standard edition that they simply make up different units (21).

This is not enough, however. There are, according to defenders of a unified composition of Psalms 146–150, several other criteria tying these poems together, e.g. "intertextual references to one another", and "shared reference texts" (22); furthermore, the progressive "context of Psalms 146–150 in this order" and "the framing Hallelujahs of Psalms 146–150" (28) allegedly constitute the desired unity. All these assumptions are "highly problematic, though. Thus, a hypothesis of a separate origin of each of Psalms 146–150 and their compilation for the end of the Masoretic Psalter but not other Psalters can be formulated. A closer separate analysis of each of Psalms 146–150 as well as a separate interpretation of each of their oldest text forms, MT, DSS, and LXX, is necessary to confirm this hypothesis" (28).

After this introduction Alma Brodersen undertakes a most meticulous scrutiny of the individual psalms concerned, going, however, backwards in the Masoretic order to avoid whatsoever pressure to construe a progressive coherence. From Psalm 150 (31-86) to Psalm 146 (229-269) she applies a fairly stereotyped grid of inquiries and observations to each text. Taking Psalm 150 as a model: (a) Hebrew text plus English translation; (b) form, (c) intertextuality, (d) content, (e) genre, (f) date, (g) unity, and (h) overall interpretation of the poem — until this point considering only the Masoretic text (31-62). The analysis then is followed up by three sections on the (i + j) Dead Sea and (k) Masada fragments (63-67) and seven on the Septuagint version of Psalm 150 (68-85), comprising (l) Greek text and its translation into English, as well as its (m) form, (n) intertextuality, (o) content, (p) genre, (q) date, (r) unity, and, finally, the (s) overall interpretation of all three editions of the psalm, annotating the main differences between them (86).

The painstaking analyses of all five end-psalms of the Psalter employ, with slight modifications, that same stereotyped, rigid pattern even to the point that the main sections (a – s) are subdivided as much as possible by the same rubrics or questions. Thus, (b) “form” splits up into “outline”, “syntax”, “structure”, “poetic devices” of Psalm 150 (31-35). The same items and order recur for Psalm 149 (87-92), Psalm 148 (132-137), Psalm 147 (173-178), Psalm 146 (230-234), and Psalm 145^{LXX} (258-260). [Of course, Psalms 150–147 do have a section “form” with identical subdivisions also for their respective LXX editions]. In paragraph (d) “content” we are likely to encounter all the way through subdividing questions, such as: “Who is called to praise...?”, “Which God is to be praised...?”, “Where or why or how is God to be praised...?”, “What are the reasons for praise?” (43-47; cf. 74-78; 98-100; 123-124; 142-148; 165-169; 189-197; 221-227; 240-241; 265). This repetitious organization of the work makes visible a very careful and exact scholarship permitting a comparative reading. But it also produces certain monotonies especially in light of the fact that sometimes an incredible mass of relevant references has been piled up (cf. 119-123; 137-142; 158-162; 215-220; 260-264 etc.). Really astonishing is Brodersen’s capacity and oversight to digest dozens of commentaries on the Psalms quoting them in specific places and contexts and confronting them with her own research insights, accumulated in avalanches of reference-materials.

Since the paragraph (c) “intertextuality” is a decisive one in the debate on “holistic” reading of the Psalter, we may take a closer look at it. Do the five closing poems, all clad in poetic, hymnic language, and partly in hallelujah-framing, show a close coherence among each other and possibly to other biblical texts which could make them redactional literature of the final phase of the Psalter-composition? Intensive search for strong literary ties almost in all cases do not produce convincing evidence. Psalm 150, for instance, shares words, ideas, and conceptions with neighboring or distant biblical texts only haphazardly and thinly. Mention of dance and music in 2 Sam 6,5, for instance, does not establish a firm relationship between these texts (37-38). Nor do references to or shared words with Chronicles, Isaiah, Ezechiel or other Psalms create literary conjunctions and “reading” books. “Even if only the shortness of Psalm 150 prevents the identification of intertextual references, interpretations cannot be based on the Psalm’s intertextuality but have to take into account the general meaning of the words” (41). Psalm 149 is credited with references to sections of Torah and verses in Isaiah or

Hosea by some commentaries, but they are weak, according to the author. Also, other psalms (as Psalms 2; 96; 98; 146; 147; 148) bear little resemblance to each other; the little affinity which may be found may have been inserted secondarily (94-96). The four companion-psalms of the Psalter's close "show no references except the framing Hallelujahs" (98). The balance for Psalm 148, that great call for cosmic praise, is equally negative, according to Brodersen. Painstaking enumeration of shared words with Genesis 1 (nineteen instances altogether) or with other psalms does not improve the situation towards more literary proximity. The same holds true for alleged affinities with Psalm 2; 33; 96; 98; 103; 104; 146; 147; 149; 150. Extraordinarily, Psalm 148^{LXX} is to be seen in close relationship to Psalm 32^{LXX} (160-161, 165). Detailed analyses of Psalms 147 and 146 are unsuccessful as well in this regard. The author defies all scholars who recognize essential literary connections between the relevant psalms and any other biblical canonical text.

The result of this intertextual scrutiny in conjunction with the aforementioned recognition of several authentic and independent editions of the Psalter leads to the conclusion: The end of the Psalter does not show any symptoms of being a carefully composed entity. Other aspects of Brodersen's work do support this finding: form and contents of each psalm (syntax, structure, poetics, material references, topics, possible life situations) lack the cohesion of well-knit and purposefully composed literary entities. Even the "Hallelujah-framing" (cf. 63-66; 206-210; 275) does not provide literary stability because it occurs so irregularly, especially in the Qumran version of the psalms. All arguments taken together, there remains little evidence in favor of a holistic interpretation of the Psalter. Rather, Israel's prayers and songs from the beginning and after being assembled into a written "book" or scroll apparently have been widely used as pieces in liturgical performances, not as private reading poetry. (This very last phrase admittedly is borne out from the reviewer's desire that it might be true. But Brodersen's findings are leading in that direction, aren't they? And they are quite convincing, overall).

The general conclusion recapitulates chapters and sections of the book (270-278). Finally it reiterates Brodersen's initial hypothesis: "The end of the Masoretic Psalter is formed by a collocation of five originally separate Psalms. A comparison of the oldest preserved sources does not provide indications of a literary development of a series of Psalms at least partly written for the specific purpose of forming the end of the Psalter. Rather, the oldest factually preserved sources appear to place importance on Psalms 146-150 as individual texts" (277).

Brodersen's dissertation is a stupendously dedicated, meticulous, well-organized piece of work. Verdicts about e.g. "intertextual references" fall monotonously after each biblical citation: "unlikely", "does not suffice to make it likely" — 15 times on pages 36-40. One wonders how these findings "not likely" or "unlikely" later transmute into statements "no reference at all". On the whole, however, the mass of evidence on several levels of observation is convincing. The times of Psalter-interpretation superseding Psalm-exegesis seem to be ending (cf. also D. Willgren, *The Formation of the 'Book' of Psalms* [FAT 2.Reihe 88; Tübingen 2016).

Francisco Javier RUIZ-ORTIZ, *The Dynamics of Violence and Revenge in the Hebrew Book of Esther* (Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 175). Leiden, Brill, 2017. xiv-275 p. 16 × 24.5. €110,00

The author addresses an important issue: violence and revenge in the Hebrew Book of Esther. The study, however, often extends beyond the Book of Esther to include a broad survey of issues that touch upon the entire Hebrew Bible. The book is divided into two parts: the first offers a treatment of preliminary questions in the study of Esther, while the second presents an exegetical analysis of three chosen passages. The study appears to be motivated by two basic questions: How did the author of the Book of Esther develop the dynamics of violence and revenge? And how did the author structurally incorporate them into the composition of the entire book.

Chapter one offers a helpful survey of the scholarship on the Book of Esther — it is a goldmine of information on many general issues, such as the observance of Purim. The chapter also deals with certain literary questions: What sort of literature is the Book of Esther? How are the characters displayed? What is the structure of the book? Also considered is the scholarly debate on a variety of issues, such as whether or not the Book of Esther is a reinterpretation of other (biblical) stories, the presence of irony and/or sarcasm in the book, and the use of rhetorical devices. There is a good discussion of the different motifs and themes that scholars have detected, such as banquets, kingship, obedience and disobedience, power, loyalty to the Jewish community, inviolability of the Jewish nation and reversal, the topics of shame and honour, and the problem of the absence of God. With regard to the last-mentioned issue, Ruiz-Ortiz stands in a long line of scholars who claim that the book ought to be read from a religious perspective, as its intended audience was most likely a community of religious Jews who would have recognized the elements that connect the book with the salvation story of the Israelites. Also included is a survey of the different trends in current interpretation, such as the carnivalesque reading of the book, as well as political and feminist interpretations. In the last section of the first chapter, Ruiz-Ortiz gives a summary of the scholarship regarding the reception of Esther in visual art, literature and music.

Chapter two is where the analysis begins. Ruiz-Ortiz first deals with the subjects of violent actions (שנא, צרר, איב), noting that, although the Jews are performing the most violent actions, it is the Persians who are described as those who planned acts of aggression which, in fact, were never carried out. None of the terms indicating “enemies” is used with regard to the Jews. The enemy par excellence is Haman. Special attention is given to the feelings which can lead to violence: קצף, חמה. The Persians, and Haman in particular, all embody the anger that is mostly provoked by a person and that can turn into an act of self-destruction. Curiously, a female person is never associated with anger. The focus of the analysis then shifts to the variety of verbs describing violent acts: תלא, תלע, שלט, שלט, חרנ, אבד, שלח, נקם. The analysis of each term follows the same procedure: first the general usage of the concept in the Hebrew Bible is described, and then the specific uses the verb in the Book of Esther are examined. On occasion, one wonders if more information needs to be considered. With regard to the issue of hanging, for example, it is evident that not all the appropriate material has been dealt with. But then again, one cannot expect the author to write 12 volumes, one

on each of the concepts analysed. With regard to the concept of taking revenge, the author notes that “the vengeance described in Esther 8–9 is proportionate to the evil inflicted or threatened in earlier chapters” (83). The violence can be considered as an act of retributive justice, which was regulated by the king. Every section concludes with a fine summary, and, on occasion, interesting extra information is added. At the end of the chapter the author states that in the Book of Esther the Persians are characterized as those who are infuriated and enraged. They seem governed by an “irrationality of anger” (84). Their emotional situation stands in contrast to the “order attributed to the Persian empire” (85), and it is precisely the king who authorizes a series of actions of vengeance in order to re-establish order! The order that the king seeks to establish is supposed to guarantee a situation of “lasting wholeness” (85). Ruiz-Ortiz also concludes from his analysis in chapter 2 that although the name of God is not mentioned, there is in the background and language used a reference to the divine design for Israel.

Chapter 3 deals with violence in the narrative of Esther. Ruiz-Ortiz first demonstrates how the literary composition of Esther can be divided narratively into scenes of actions (showing). In the narration, a high proportion of text is direct speech. Edicts and laws also play a huge role in the Book of Esther. While announcing his intention to assign the terms studied in chapter 2 to either narration, speeches, or legal documents, Ruiz-Ortiz abruptly turns to address what kind of plot is present in the Book of Esther, and how violence fits into the plot. Attention is then given to the issue of point of view and the characterisation of the different characters, the framework, and the so-called universals of narrative. This chapter, although interesting, is the least focused. The reader is often left wondering: what is the connection with violence and revenge? As violence plays a crucial role in the narrative, and as some figures contribute to the aggression, a more focused analysis could have brought something new into light.

Part 2 offers three exegetical analyses taken from three sections of the Book of Esther. The first passage to be considered is Esth 2,21-23 (“The King’s Life is Spared”). After defining the beginning and the end of this section of text, the setting of the text, and the structure, Ruiz-Ortiz offers his commentary, while keeping the focus on the usage of the verbs as discussed in chapter 2. The characters are again studied in detail. I noticed the re-use of the terminology, albeit with a variant (“botched insurrection”), as developed by S. Frolov (“botched regicide”); unfortunately, the author forgot to insert here a reference to the latter work (151). In the analyses, it becomes clear why in chapter 3 the author also studied characters and legal documents, aside from the terminology, especially the verbs as developed in chapter 2. Ruiz-Ortiz demonstrates that already in these verses the reader is informed that, on the one hand, the punishment for traitors is hanging on the gallows and, on the other hand, that Mordecai is the good character in the plot. The analysis leads to the conclusion that aggression is dealt with in a proper way at the Persian court. However, as in all good stories, the result and ending point are not yet there, and the reader is kept in suspense.

The second passage studied is Esth 7,1-10 (“The Beginning of the End”). As was done in the preceding analysis, Ruiz-Ortiz again recalls the elements necessary to study this section, such as the theme of banquets, and considers the organisation of the plot in this specific part of the narrative. Again all elements seem to point to how justice was administered in the empire. Instead of the king being the possible victim of the plot, in chapter 7 it is the queen who is at risk. I appreciated the

parallel made between 2,21-23 and 7,1-10, such as the king vs. the queen, and also the two eunuchs vs. Haman. Whereas many of these parallels have already been studied, the observations regarding the last-mentioned parallel are among the new things offered in this monograph.

The last section studied is Esth 9,1-19, entitled “Before the Party Begins”. Ruiz-Ortiz points to a series of nice connections between this chapter and the former ones. This is important, since it is debated whether or not this section of the text belongs to the original text. In this chapter, the main characters are rather aggressive. Scholars justify the violence in this chapter by claiming that it is a case of self-defence, or they consider the killings “as an example of retributive justice” (203), or they point to the literary genre of the text, with its typical exaggerations. The exegetical comments in this section are excellent, with the conclusion nicely formulated: “Paradoxically peace and tranquillity are only achieved when the enemy and their threat are blotted out” (227). Then, as the title of this section indicates, the party can start!

The monograph ends with succinctly formulated conclusions, a fine bibliography, and a double index (authors and biblical citations). The author (and his supervisor) may be congratulated for this fine piece of work!

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Novum Testamentum

H. Daniel ZACHARIAS, *Matthew's Presentation of the Son of David. Davidic Tradition and Typology in the Gospel of Matthew* (T&T Clark Biblical Studies) London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. xi-224 p. 16 x 24. £85.49

Matthew's extensive use of Davidic traditions has attracted many scholars to explore the impact and influence of these traditions in the presentation of Jesus as the Son of David in the First Gospel. In this monograph, Daniel Zacharias contends that “Matthew through his Gospel intentionally utilized Davidic tradition on a variety of levels, as well as utilized Davidic typology to present Jesus as the Son of David” (7). Zacharias also argues that the evangelist makes pervasive use of the Son of David theme “not only to present Jesus as the Davidic Messiah but also to explain from the OT scriptures the full implications of what it means to Jesus to be the Son of David” (7). What is unique to Zacharias's monograph is that he not only examines Matthew's use of Davidic traditions in particular passages but also does a comprehensive study of David and Davidic typology in the Gospel of Matthew as a whole.

The author establishes his thesis by studying the key texts from the Gospel of Matthew in the order of the narrative. The monograph is organized in eight chapters with a thirteen-page bibliography, an index of references and an index

of authors. After the introductory chapter, the monograph treats six different topics, each in a chapter (2-7), connected with the theme, Son of David in the Gospel. The first two are from the infancy narrative (chs. 2-3), the next two are from the public ministry of Jesus (chs. 4-5) and the last two are from the passion narrative (chs. 6-7). The concluding chapter (ch. 8) gives a summary of the findings and highlights the unique contribution of the study. It also offers some proposals for further research.

A brief summary of previous studies on the development of the Davidic Tradition in early Judaism as well as the use of that tradition in Matthew is given in the introduction. It is unfortunate that the author was not able to consider the following two monographs published in 2016: A. Rodríguez Laiz, *El Mesías hijo de David. El mesianismo dinástico en los comienzos del cristianismo* (ABE 65; Estella 2016) and J. Dvořáček, *The Son of David in Matthew's Gospel in the Light of the Solomon as Exorcist Tradition* (WUNT 415; Tübingen 2016).

Zacharias calls the method that he follows in this study a "literary-critical probe". Accordingly, the author applies a literary-critical study both of the texts through which the evangelist presents Jesus as the Son of David and of the possible textual traditions on which he might have relied. As part of the methodology, the author also offers definitions of a series of technical terms that he uses in this work (citations, paraphrases, allusions, echoes, typology etc.) adapted mainly from the works of Stanley E. Porter and Richard B. Hays. Though it looks slightly elementary, it helps readers to follow the author's train of thought and argumentation. Similarly, the brief sketch of Davidic Messianism (reflected in the Old Testament, in Psalms of Solomon 17, in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the New Testament) given at the end of the introductory chapter proves highly informative.

In the second chapter, the author discusses the prominence given to the figure of David in the first verse of the Gospel and in the genealogy. Discussing in detail the important observations and proposals of various authors, he convincingly argues that Matthew presents Jesus as the Son of David at the outset of the Gospel. At the same time, his dependence on "gematria theory" to establish "David centism" appears quite excessive.

Various Son of David motifs found in the rest of the infancy narrative are discussed in the third chapter. Since Joseph is called Son of David by the angel, Zacharias argues, Mary, the betrothed wife of Joseph, should also be considered as belonging to the family line of David. By taking Mary as his wife and naming Jesus, Joseph exercises his authority as husband and father and confirms the Davidic lineage of Jesus. Referring to Isa 7,13, Zacharias tries to show that the Immanuel Prophecy (Isa 7,14) given to King Ahaz was primarily a promise given to the "House of David". According to him, Matthew utilizes this quotation not to introduce the "divine sonship" of Jesus, but to "graft Jesus into the line of David" (63). Hence, the author concludes that "the evangelist draws upon the Isaiah prophecy not only because of its typological correspondence to Mary's virginal conception, but also because it expresses Jesus as a typological fulfilment of the Isaianic promise of God that the House of David will continue...". The author points out that the use of Bethlehem, the hometown of David as well as the place of his anointing, as the birthplace of Jesus again emphasizes the Davidic motif in the infancy narrative. Similarly, the episode of the visit of the Magi and the events following are viewed as attempts by the evangelist to show Jesus as the

legitimate Davidic king in contrast to Herod the wicked king. Readers may readily accept these insights and conclusions, but they may find it difficult to support the author's proposal to link Ramah with the Davidic motif. It is more natural to associate Ramah with Rachel, whose weeping is mentioned in the text. It gives the impression that the author has deliberately ignored the name of Rachel in his analysis, so as to push the Davidic motif to the fore.

In the fourth chapter the author deals mainly with the Matthean passages displaying the Son of David as a healer. All the five texts (Matt 9,27; 12,22-23; 15,22; 20,30-31; 21,14-15) where Jesus is addressed as the "Son of David" by the supplicants are briefly surveyed. It is followed by a discussion on "why Matthew drew such a strong connection to the activity of healing and recognition of Jesus as Son of David". Four different proposals (David as exorcist, Solomon as exorcist and healer, 4Q521 and the Son of David as healer, Ezekiel's eschatological shepherd) are examined. Referring to Ezekiel's Messianic shepherd (Ezek 34,23-24) and to Matthew's extensive use of Ezekiel 34 in the Gospel to portray Jesus' identity and mission, Zacharias, following the arguments of Wayne Baxter, concludes "that Ezek 34 provides Matthew's warrant for connecting the title 'Son of David' with healing" (101). While Zacharias vehemently argues for linking the shepherd imagery in the Gospel to God's Davidic shepherd, he overlooks God's declaration in Ezek 34,11 that he himself will come in search of his sheep. It would be more fitting to link the shepherd imagery in the gospels with this declaration and interpret it as God's coming in Jesus, the good shepherd, in search of his lost sheep.

Zacharias discusses, in the fifth chapter, the episodes on the Sabbath controversy (Matt 12,1-8), the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem (Matt 21,6-17) and Jesus' question on the Messiah's identity based on Psalm 110 (Matt 22,41-46). Identifying the reference to King David in Matt 12,3-8 as a first-order typology, the author concludes that this episode displays the authority of King David (the type) "as the core part of the argument and reasoning for Jesus' ultimate authority over the Sabbath" (110). The pericope on the triumphal entry with the crowd's reception of the Son of David is discussed in great detail, showing its link with Matt 20,29-34 and with the infancy narrative. Similarly, the influence of the Book of Zechariah, not only in the text of the triumphal entry but also in the whole Gospel of Matthew, is well explored and exegetically explained. Regarding the implication of Jesus' question about the Son of David, Zacharias concurs with the scholars who argue that this episode does not imply a rejection of the title (Son of David) as somehow inadequate, but, in fact, expands the meaning of the title. Obviously, this pericope does not reject Jesus' identity as Son of David; rather it affirms that the Son of David is greater than David. While agreeing with the observations, analyses and conclusions of the author, one may wonder why he does not discuss verse 45 where the *crux interpretum* (Zacharias refuses to label it so) is found!

The similarity between the betrayal of David by Ahithophel and the betrayal of Jesus by Judas is the main issue discussed in the sixth chapter. Zacharias draws attention to several points of contact between these two betrayals with the help of betrayal Psalms (Psalms 41; 55; 69; 109), Targums and Rabbinic writings. He concludes that when the evangelist "reflected on Judas' betrayal of Jesus, he thought of Ahithophel and coloured his narrative accordingly" (169). He also explicates allusions to and echoes of David's agony on the Mount of Olives in

Jesus' agony on the Mount of Olives and arrest. Thus he shows that "while Judas follows the Ahithophel typology, Jesus follows a David typology" (169).

Jesus' cry on the cross reciting Psalm 22 is analysed in detail in the seventh chapter. Based on the superscription found in the Psalm, Zacharias argues that Matthew (and other evangelists) considered it as a psalm of David, and drew upon it in portraying Jesus' death on the cross and so linked the passion of the Son of David with the passion of David. Thus, he shows that "in his birth, ministry, and death, Jesus is consistently portrayed with Davidic overtones" (171). Considering the prophetic nature of Psalm 22, he also suggests that it is possible that the psalm was even read as David's prophetic prediction of Jesus' death.

The study is very systematically organized, presented and documented. Inter-testamental literature and Rabbinic writings that allude to Davidic traditions are extensively explored. While the short summaries and conclusions given at the end of each section and chapter aid easy comprehension, frequent long citations from both primary and secondary sources sometimes make the reading heavy. This study has certainly achieved the author's stated goal "to provide a comprehensive portrait of Matthew's extensive interaction with Davidic tradition and use of Davidic typology in his presentation of Jesus" (187).

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Alexandra GRUCA-MACAULAY, *Lydia as a Rhetorical Construct in Acts* (Emory Studies in Early Christianity 18). Atlanta, SBL, 2016. 321 p. 15 × 23. Hardback \$60.95. Paperback \$49.95.

Comment un lecteur du premier siècle pouvait-il recevoir la figure de la «marchande de pourpre» que Paul et ses compagnons rencontrent au bord de la rivière, à Philippes (Actes 16)? C'est au moyen de l'analyse socio-rhétorique, développée par Vernon K. Robbins et L. Gregory Bloomquist, qu'Alexandra Gruca-Macaulay se propose de répondre à cette question, en trois étapes: une analyse de texture intérieure (lexique, argumentation, narration, sensorialité), une analyse *intertextuelle* (croisant différentes textures du monde autour du texte: historique, culturelle, sociale, économique et religieuse) et une étude de la texture idéologique (altération et reformulation de *topoi* préexistants). Ce faisant, il s'agit de quitter l'image de Lydie comme hôtesse mettant ses biens et sa demeure à disposition de la mission, telle que Richard Ascough la décrit dans sa petite monographie récente (*Lydia. Paul's Cosmopolitan Hostess* [Paul's social network]. [Collegeville, MN 2009] 127) pour l'accueillir dans sa marginalité, y compris sexuellement ambiguë, d'immigrée colporteuse de biens qui est reconnue comme «fidèle au Seigneur» (Ac 16,15).

L'ouvrage, issu d'une thèse soutenue à l'université d'Ottawa en 2013, est clair dans sa démarche comme dans les catégories qu'il emploie; des conclusions régulières permettent de vérifier le chemin parcouru. L'écriture est agréable et inventive dans ses synthèses, même si les termes techniques de l'analyse socio-rhétorique sont parfois un peu trop présents dans le texte, en particulier pour les catégories corporelles que Bruce Malina a reprises à Bernard de Gérardon (44-45), comme l'«emotion-fused thought», ou le «self-expressive speech».

L'analyse de texture intérieure (65-114) permet de mettre au jour les tensions et «blancs» au sein de la péricope étudiée, qui va de la vision du Macédonien à Troas jusqu'au départ de Paul et Silas (Ac 16,9-40). Diverses *synkrisis*, certaines déjà repérées par la recherche, sont explicitées: entre les deux femmes (la marchande et l'esclave), entre l'homme macédonien de la vision nocturne et Lydie, entre les deux figures de convertis (Lydie et le geôlier) ou bien entre la marchande de pourpre avec les propriétaires de l'esclave (103-104), le parallélisme servant de «pierre de touche» pour évaluer la foi de Lydie. De plus, la place des corps est particulièrement soulignée, dans leurs déplacements, leurs postures, et les traitements qu'ils reçoivent.

Dans l'analyse *intertextuelle* (115-199), les tensions repérées commencent à trouver leur explication. Les *topoi* étudiés sont l'identité ethnique de Lydie, les modèles d'hospitalité, le réseau de références militaires, l'identité sociale des Romains, les libérations miraculeuses, et enfin le contexte carcéral. Contestant à juste titre que l'auteur des Actes soit intéressé par le statut social ou économique de Lydie, ou que sa qualification de *sebomene ton theon* ait une valeur technique de prosélyte du judaïsme, Alexandra Gruca-Macaulay développe le «profil ethnographique» de la région d'origine de la marchande, qui est celle du fameux et richissime roi Crésus et du fleuve Pactole. La richesse supposée de la Lydie est très régulièrement associée par les auteurs anciens à une vie luxurieuse, surtout féminine, allant jusqu'à la prostitution. Quant aux hommes lydiens, ils sont «efféminés». Commercer la pourpre peut aussi aller dans le sens d'une vie de luxure, voire de tromperie effrontée. Aussi, lorsque Luc finit son introduction de Lydie par le mot *sebomene* (pieuse), en Ac 16,14, il crée nettement un contraste avec les traits provenant de son profil ethnographique (lydienne, marchande). Enfin la proposition qu'elle fait d'accueillir les missionnaires chez elle est un véritable défi lancé à l'honneur social de ses hôtes masculins, qui risquent d'être associés à sa possible mauvaise réputation. Les *topoi* sur l'appel au secours du Macédonien vu comme appel à la conquête, sur la romanité de Philippes ou sur les prisons sont traités avec finesse, mais ont déjà été bien parcourus par d'autres études. Cependant, faut-il vraiment lire l'appel à l'aide du Macédonien, que Luc introduit par le verbe *parakaleô*, comme relevant du *topos* de la «guerre sainte» (163), ou de celui de «l'appel militaire à l'aide» (173)? Les autres usages du verbe dans le diptyque lucanien suggèrent un sens plus large que seulement militaire, que le contexte de Troas ne suffit pas à justifier entièrement; la notion de soutien dans une épreuve serait probablement suffisante. Cependant, à travers ces analyses, appuyées sur une bonne connaissance de la littérature antique, des stéréotypes qu'elle véhicule et des valeurs sociales qu'elle soutient, on peut mesurer d'une part à quel point les deux convertis (Lydie et le geôlier) sont des figures peu présentables socialement, et d'autre part que le combat à Philippes contre les structures de pouvoir de la colonie romaine est loin d'être aussi réussi qu'on pourrait le penser à première vue.

C'est dans l'analyse «idéologique» (201-268) qu'Alexandra Gruca-Macaulay réussit à mettre en évidence le projet lucanien de cette péricope, qui fait s'entrechoquer différents cadres interprétatifs (physiognomie, honneur et honte, hospitalité) pour obliger au discernement qui s'en dégage. Elle repère pour cela la «*synkrisis* de la pierre lydienne» (203-210), pierre de touche qui selon la légende permettait de distinguer l'or de toute imitation. Les étapes de cette *synkrisis* sont liées aux occurrences du verbe *parakaleô* dans la péricope, auxquelles on rajoute des occurrences implicites (239; 247) lorsqu'on peut analyser qu'il s'agit d'un

appel à une alliance en vue d'un combat. Ces étapes dessinent alors un parcours pour la bonne nouvelle destinée aux Macédoniens, dans un discernement du vrai et du faux, de l'authentique et de l'hypocrite, au-delà des apparences, par diverses *synkrisis* ou «dysanalogies». L'homme macédonien qui appelle au secours, selon un cadre de type militaire, est mis en correspondance par Luc, contre toute évidence, avec une femme aux mœurs discutables, par l'annonce de l'évangile. Ce geste est validé par la sanction divine de l'ouverture du cœur de Lydie (Ac 16,14); ce qui aurait pu être le lieu de toute tromperie est évalué comme «fidèle», fiable. C'est bien dans ce sens de vérification qu'il faut ensuite comprendre le verbe «forcer» (*parabiazomai*), qui inverse les stéréotypes de l'accueil d'un hôte divin. Par contraste, la femme à l'esprit python qui semblait s'être alliée au groupe de Paul pour assurer la propagation de l'Évangile se révèle en être ennemie, car elle et ses maîtres ne sont pas fidèles au Seigneur mais à l'argent. Mis en prison, Paul et Silas révèlent leur fidélité en restant sur place, contrairement aux attentes de délivrance miraculeuse, et obtiennent ainsi une victoire inattendue dans le retournement du geôlier; l'espace même de la prison devient un lieu de prière. Une dernière *synkrisis* oppose les deux groupes de Romains présents à Philippi: les magistrats et les missionnaires emprisonnés. A la solide fidélité de ces derniers correspond antithétiquement la peur des magistrats, peur qui est le moins romain des sentiments, mais qui correspond à leur injuste traitement des prisonniers. Ce chemin de vérification par la «pierre lydienne» s'accompagne d'une reconfiguration du Dieu de Jésus, qui n'est pas un guerrier vainqueur qui punirait ses ennemis, mais un Dieu qui valorise la fidélité, dans les lieux ou les cœurs les plus improbables, tout en laissant les corps de ses fidèles être profondément éprouvés et dévalorisés aux yeux du monde. En cela, comme l'auteur l'écrit: «as a result of Luke's deliberate use of ambiguity, Philippi becomes an earthquake zone, where all standard-bearing cognitive maps destabilize» (235).

S'il y avait une question, elle porterait probablement sur l'emploi en conclusion des catégories de l'apocalyptique pour la compréhension du corpus lucanien (277-278), alors que Luc sait aussi prendre ses distances par rapport à l'attente eschatologique d'un Paul ou d'un Marc. Quoi qu'il en soit, cette étude stimulante est tout à fait exemplaire de ce qu'un travail rigoureux sur le texte et ses sources, à l'école de l'analyse socio-historique peut apporter à notre compréhension de la théologie lucanienne et de son souci des exclus.

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Richard N. LONGENECKER, *The Epistle to the Romans* (The New International Greek Testament Commentary). Grand Rapids, Michigan – Cambridge, U.K., William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016. lxxvii-1140 p. 16 x 24. \$80.00 – £53.99

This commentary on Romans is the crowning achievement of the distinguished career of Richard Longenecker, professor emeritus at Wycliffe College, University of Toronto. A main thesis of the author (16-18, 573, 582) is that Paul's focus is found in Rom 5,1 – 8,39, where he sets forth the gospel message that he

customarily proclaimed to Gentiles. According to L., Paul thus emphasizes participation in Christ more than justification, the theme highlighted in the previous section, Rom 1,16 – 4,25, where Paul offers a more Jewish Christian presentation of the gospel message.

L.'s views for interpreting Paul lie somewhere between the old perspective and the new perspective. On the one hand, he is critical of the new perspective interpretation of Dunn that "works of the law" refer to Jewish boundary markers such as circumcision, keeping the Sabbath, and dietary laws (365). On the other hand, his emphasis on participation rather than justification distances him from the traditional "Lutheran" view of Paul. Moreover, he acknowledges the contributions of E.P. Sanders as (1) providing a corrective to a distorted view of Judaism as a religion of "works righteousness" (though he notes that the pendulum may have swung too far the other way) and (2) allowing for a renewed appreciation of Paul's Jewish background (381). L. notes that his early work, *Paul, Apostle of Liberty* (New York 1964; Grand Rapids, MI 2015), anticipated such views of the new perspective.

The bibliography (xxviii-lxvii) includes literature on Romans in English, German, and French, up until 2011. The most-cited authors in the Index of Authors (1087-1093) are those who like L. have authored large-scale commentaries on Romans: e.g., Cranfield, Dunn, Fitzmyer, Jewett, Käsemann, Moo, and Sanday and Headlam. L. also makes frequent reference to key figures in the history of interpretation: e.g., Origen, Ambrosiaster, Augustine, Chrysostom, Luther, Calvin. However, his aim evidently is not to give readers the latest or most complete bibliography, as there are some notable omissions. At times, he draws heavily on 19th and early 20th century scholars but not on recent ones (e.g., the excursus on 686-694).

The introduction is brief (1-39) since L. summarizes here the lengthy treatment found in his book, *Introducing Romans. Critical Issues in Paul's Most Famous Letter* (Grand Rapids, MI 2011). L. holds that Paul writes primarily for two reasons (10-12): to give the Christians in Rome a "spiritual gift" (1,11) through his teaching, and to seek their assistance for his planned outreach to Spain (15,24) (116-117). Paul also writes to defend himself from criticism (e.g., 3,8). L. emphasizes that Romans is an occasional letter more than a theological tractate, and thus Paul also writes to give instructions regarding "the weak" and "the strong" (14,1 – 15,13) and the payment of taxes (13,1-7). Regarding Paul's audience (8-9), L. describes the ethnic makeup of the Christian community in Rome as consisting of a majority of Gentiles and a minority of Jews. He notes however that the whole community had been influenced by the Jewish Christianity of the mother church in Jerusalem. This view, shared by other scholars, exercises a big influence on L.'s understanding of the whole letter and its various sections. For example, he maintains that the first and third sections (1,16 – 4,25; 9,1 – 11,36) use more the language of Jews and Jewish Christians (so that Paul can find common ground with the Roman church), but the second and fourth sections (5,1 – 8,39; 12,1 – 15,13) represent Paul's customary way of presenting the gospel to Gentiles (386-387, 534, 912).

The commentary proper follows a typical outline of Romans: the epistolary opening (salutation 1,1-7; thanksgiving 1,8-12) and conclusion (15,33 – 16,16; 16,17-27) frame the body of the letter, consisting of an introduction (1,13-15), the four large sections just mentioned, and a closing (15,14-32). The depth of treatment is somewhat uneven as almost half the commentary proper (almost 500 pages) covers Rom 1-4 and the next 550 pages cover Rom 5-16. In general,

the following areas are considered for each passage: Translation, Textual Notes, Form/Structure/Setting, Exegetical Comments, Biblical Theology, and Contextualization for Today. Under the Form/Structure/Setting heading, a feature found in his earlier commentary on *Galatians* (WBC 41; Dallas 1990), L. points out a passage's compositional structure (though one may not always agree with his identification of Paul's thesis statements) and introduces the key issues that will be taken up in the exegetical treatment. L. also includes six detailed excursuses throughout the book, covering the righteousness of God, the new perspective, issues in Rom 3,25a, the message of reconciliation, the term "in Christ Jesus", and the term "remnant".

Like other scholars, L. divides his treatment of the first section (1,16 – 4,25) into two parts (1,16 – 3,20; 3,21 – 4,25). Unlike other scholars, however, L. (157) views the statement in 1,16-17 as the thesis of only the first section (up to 4,25), rather than the *propositio* that governs the letter (at least up through 8,39). He is correct in saying that Paul begins his argument by writing in a way that the Christians in Rome, who were influenced by the Jerusalem church, could understand and appreciate. He thus considers the whole section 1,16 – 4,25 to be a Jewish Christian presentation of the gospel message, rather than Paul's own presentation. However, it would be better to consider only 1,18 – 3,20 in this way, so that the *propositio* in 1,16-17 could be reclaimed as Paul's own, one which he then takes up in 3,21-22 and demonstrates in 3,23 – 4,25. See J.-N. Aletti, *Justification by Faith in the Letters of Saint Paul*. Keys to Interpretation (AnBib Studia 5; Roma 2015) 119-138. In 1,18 – 3,20, as L. rightly points out, Paul focuses on divine impartiality and the sinfulness of all people, both Jews and Gentiles, thus removing the potential objection that justification for the Jews was through the law (268–269). This is the necessary preparation for the teaching in 3,21 – 4,25 that justification by faith applies to all, Jews and Gentiles. Regarding 3,22, L. favors the subjective genitive interpretation of πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ("faithfulness of Jesus Christ") (408-413), a view he already espoused in *Paul, Apostle of Liberty*, 149-152, and in his commentary *Galatians*, 87-88.

In his discussion of Abraham in Romans 4, L. notes Paul's use of the technique of *gezerah shawah* (479, 482, 499) in combining Gen 15,6 and Ps 32,1–2 LXX. As L. had done in his *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period* (Grand Rapids, MI 21999) 99-100, he explains this technique by referring to the more general rabbinic practice of "pearl stringing", i.e., citing multiple passages on a given theme from different parts of Scripture (see 516). However, the rule of *gezerah shawah* is more specific. What Paul does in 4,1-12 is unlike, e.g., the catena of texts in 3,10-18, which indeed is a case of "multiple attestation" (479). Rather, neither of the two texts that Paul has chosen here is sufficient by itself to prove his point, so it is necessary for Paul to cite both of them in order to prove the thesis in 3,21-22 on justification of faith apart from works for all, Jew and Gentile (see Aletti, *Justification*, 160-170).

As mentioned, L. holds that the second section (5,1 – 8,39) is a summary of how Paul customarily proclaimed the gospel message in his Gentile mission (538, 542, 547, 679, 706, 762). In this section, Paul emphasizes participation in Christ rather than terms like justification found in the first section (1,16 – 4,25). One difficulty with L.'s neat division is that the δικαιο- terminology is still widespread in Romans 5–8 (though not as common as in Romans 1–4). Moreover, L. rightly notes that Paul has fewer Scripture citations in this section. However, when drawing conclusions about Paul's use (Romans 9–11) or non-use (Romans 5–8) of

Scriptural citations (775-776), attention should also be given to (1) the nature of Paul's argument (whether scriptural proof is necessary or possible) and not just the contextualizing of his message for his audience, and (2) the other ways in which Paul uses Scripture, e.g., allusions, which are not lacking in Romans 5-8. For example, what Paul describes in 7,6; 8,4, involves the fulfillment of prophecies about a new covenant (Jer 31,31-34; Ezek 36,26-27); see D.J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, MI 1996) 421, 484. In L.'s view, the second section (Romans 5-8) does not just build on the first section (Romans 1-4) (by noting the implications of justification, 559-561), but goes beyond it (555, 562) and is in parallel to it (539), as Paul instructs his Roman audience further. L. here states his view that Paul "is attempting to convince his addressees that there is much more to the Christian gospel than simply the forensic doctrine of *justification* [...]. What also needs to be considered and experienced is what Christ has effected [...]. in terms of the 'personal,' 'relational,' and 'participatory' theme of *reconciliation*" (566). For somewhat similar views on participation and the relationship between Romans 1-4 and Romans 5-8, see the work of M.J. Gorman: e.g., *Inhabiting the Cruciform God*. Kenosis, Justification, and Theosis in Paul's Narrative Soteriology (Grand Rapids, MI 2009) 73-75.

L. understands the third section (9,1 - 11,36) as Paul's "christianized version" of remnant theology (767), by which he is able to address issues regarding the relationships between Jews and Gentiles in God's plan of salvation. As for the fourth section (12,1 - 15,13), L. regards the general ethical teaching found in two passages (12,1-21; 13,8-14) as an integral part of the gospel message that Paul proclaimed to Gentiles (16, 912). It is foundational for the specific teaching he gives to address civic matters (13,1-7) and the dietary dispute between "the strong" and "the weak" (14,1 - 15,13), which likely represent Gentile Christians and Jewish Christians, respectively (1012).

In summary, L.'s commentary is the mature reflection of a veteran scholar, presenting a thorough interpretation of Romans. Notwithstanding the disagreements expressed here, his work is a worthy addition to the library of large-scale Romans commentaries.

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David H. WENKEL, *Coins as Cultural Texts in the World of the New Testament* (T&T Clark Biblical Studies). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. xxv-195. p. 16 x 24. £87.29

The premise of the book, as promised in the title, is that "Coins are best understood as cultural texts" (xvii). To both biblical scholars and ancient historians,

whose eyes tend to glaze over after a few pages of specialist numismatic literature, this approach to coinage promises to be refreshing.

The introductory section, consisting of four chapters, builds an important theoretical framework for the study. Chapter 1 expands on the concept of reading coins as texts, including not only “the literal text (inscriptions), but the imagery as well” (5). The book rightly points to the great communicative power of coins, where perhaps the least interesting thing to say about them is their transactional value, and a simple description. Chapter 2 moves the discourse even further, and considers the idea of the coin as a speech-act, recognises the importance not only of the coin itself (“the world of the coin”) but also the entanglement of coinage in a network of social uses and meanings, both “in front” of the coin in its use for market transactions, accumulation of wealth and payment of taxes, as well as the power and control “behind the coin”. Chapter 3 introduces the complexity of currencies both in the Roman systems, articulated differently in the eastern and western parts of the empire, as well as the Jewish coinage, more local to the immediate world of Jesus and the first disciples. Finally, chapter 4 considers “Coins as Context”, and alerts the reader to issues with different translations of terms for the types of coins, as well as the variations among the synoptic Gospels. The chapter provides also a useful section on the “Types of Coins in the New Testament” (35-41), which goes through nine denominations of coins, providing the scriptural context of where the coin type is found, and some explanation of its value and the various implications for understanding the New Testament text.

The rest of the book is very clearly articulated in three main sections, which follow the threefold division suggested in Chapter 2. The individual chapters themselves are very clearly (almost pedantically) structured, making the text easy to navigate. Each chapter also includes a section on “Implications for Studying the New Testament,” and a convenient summary of the chapter. Section I, consisting of three chapters, looks at the “World in Front of the Coin,” and considers the wider user, or reader, in the concept of speech act. Chapter 5 discusses the concept of payment and trust, which lies at the basis of a money based economy. The various notions of fear — due to the possibilities of theft, war, ritual defilement, or death — are discussed in chapter 6, while chapter 7 focuses on the payment of taxes, not only from the financial perspective but various implications in terms of cultic purity, apostasy and submission. “The World of the Coin” itself is the focus of Section II, with an emphasis on the concept of propaganda. Chapter 8 considers the use of inscriptions and the various languages and scripts. Chapter 9 focuses on the issue of dating the various Roman and Jewish issue coins, while chapter 10 and 11 discuss the use of imagery on the coins, considering Roman and Jewish images respectively. Chapter 12 turns to metallurgy and considers the various metals in the coins and their symbolic significance. Section III on “The World behind the Coin” considers how coins reflect and shape power. The issue of the construction and expression of identity is considered in chapter 13, while chapter 14 discussed the issue of presence through coinage, and sense of omnipresence of the gods and the emperor. Chapter 15 turns to production of the coins, and the implications of authority and autonomy in the control of sourcing of raw materials and minting of coins. Finally, section IV, and its single chapter 16, brings together the author’s conclusions.

Wenkel undoubtedly proposes a highly interesting project in the introduction (xvii-xxv) and the introductory chapters, as well as in the book’s structure, but

unfortunately is less robust in its delivery. While some sections, such as the one of types of coins already discussed, are very helpful, other sections remain very generic. While we are warned that the author “will not engage very technical macro- and microeconomic discussions of taxes, credit, and circulation of money” (xxi) and that there will be an “emphasis on generalities” (xxi), the book would have benefited from some more specifics which could be particularly useful to the New Testament scholar. One example is the absence of any explanation of the *publicani* (66), with the tax farming system employed by the Roman, and its social, political and religious implications in Jewish society. Similarly, the book’s discussion of symbolism remains very generic, and hardly illustrated. While we should not expect a thorough encyclopaedic approach listing and explaining each image, Wenkel risks leaving the reader only with a theoretical framework which could have been far better understood with more concrete examples.

Another weakness of the book is the very surprisingly lack of illustrations. Only five images of coins are provided (73, 83, 89, 119, 124), and these simply with greyscale photographs. Only two other images of symbols on coinage are given (105, 109), both of rather poor quality. Considering that several examples of coins are referred to in the text, good quality drawings and photographs would have given the reader a far clearer idea, illustrating the rich conceptual world proposed by the book, and greatly enhancing its readability and usability.

The book has, unfortunately, a number of surprising blunders. The author asserts, for example, that “The KJV translates the denarius with the misleading word “penny,” referring to the modern British pence” (36), seemingly unaware that the King James’ Version is an early 17th century translation, and that pre-decimal abbreviations of £.s.d for pounds, shillings, and pence actually derives from the Roman *libra*, *solidus*, and *denarius*, making penny the best translation possible in 1611. Wenkel also states that “This language called Paleo-Hebrew has also been called (1) square script, (2) Syrian script, or (3) Aramaic script” (82-83), confusing firstly issues of language and script, and secondly the older Hebrew script or Paleo-Hebrew, part of the world of Canaanite/Phoenician scripts, with the later Hebrew square script derived from Aramaic, with which the modern reader is familiar through its use in printed editions of the Hebrew Bible. Even more surprising, the author also seems to think that Tetragrammaton is a “shortening of Yahweh’s name” (92), rather than simply the four letters of the Hebrew (consonantal) form. Bizarrely, Wenkel also asserts that “Gold was the metal that could achieve the highest level of purity and this meant gold was the most valuable metal” (130) — seemingly ignoring that its rarity, and resistance to corrosion, would have been more important factors in its desirability. Other assertions are, at least, debatable, such as Wenkel apparently uncritical understanding of Herod’s massacre of the innocents as historical fact (119). Wenkel also refers to a “thumb-sized pomegranate decoration” as “the only surviving relic from Solomon’s temple” (124): while there is still some debate, several experts consider the inscription a forgery, added onto an authentically ancient artefact.

Despite these criticisms, the driving concept of the book — reading coins as cultural texts — remains one with great potential. There is certainly scope for an introductory text that bridges the gap between the parallel worlds of numismatists and New Testament scholars. The conceptual framework of the book remains very promising, and should definitely be worked upon. As noted, however, the book

does have some shortcomings that need to be addressed: it is a pity that these were not picked up at an earlier stage, through more robust editorial work and peer review. It should be hoped, therefore, that a revised edition will be produced. Improved, it could become an excellent introductory text for biblical scholars who would like to understand better the coins of the world of the New Testament.

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Haelewyck, Jean-Claude, ed., *Evangelium secundum Marcum* (Vetus Latina. Die Reste der altlateinischen Bibel, Band 17, Fasc. 10: Mc 14,44–fin.). Freiburg, Verlag Herder, 2018. 721-840 p. 24 × 32.5. €96,00

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Lanier, Gregory R., *Old Testament Conceptual Metaphors and the Christology of Luke's Gospel* (Library of New Testament Studies 591). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2018. v-292 p. 16 × 24. £85.00

Lee, Jongkyung, *A Redactional Study of the Book of Isaiah 13–23*. Oxford Theology and Religion Monographs. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2018. v-216 p. 14.5 × 22.5. £65.00